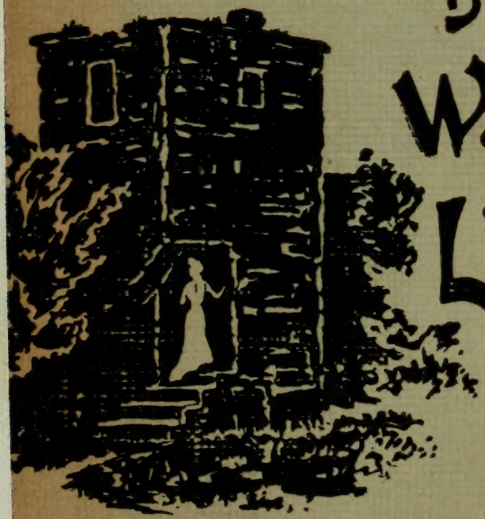
St Andrews Ghost Stories

By

W. T. Linskill



St Andrews Ghost Stories

BY

W. T. LINSKILL

(Dean of Guild).

FOURTH EDITION.

There are ghosts and phantoms round us,
On the mountains, on the sea ;
Some are cold and some are clammy,
Some are hot as hot can be.
They can creep, and crawl, and hover,
And can howl, and shriek, and wail,
And those who want to hear of them
Must read this little tale.

W. T. L.

J. & G. INNES, *St Andrews Citizen* Office.

1921.

Dedicated to My Old Friends,

JOHN L. LOW

and

CHARLES BLAIR MACDONALD.

CONTENTS.

The Beckoning Monk.

MANY years ago, about the time of the Tay Bridge gale, I was staying at Edinburgh with a friend of mine, an actor manager. I had just come down from the paint-room of the theatre, and was emerging from the stage-door, when I encountered Miss Elsie H——, a then well-known actress.

"You are just the very person I wanted to meet," she said. "Allow me to introduce you to my friend, Mr Spencer Ashton. He's not an actor, he's an artist, and he's got such a queer, queer story about ghosts and things near your beloved St Andrews."

I bowed to Mr Ashton, who was a quiet-looking man, pale and thin, rather like a benevolent animated hairpin. He reminded me somehow of Fred Vokes. We shook hands warmly.

"Yes," he said, "my story sounds like fiction, but it is a fact, as I can prove. It is rather long, but it may possibly interest you. Where could we foregather?"

"Come and dine with me at the Edinburgh Hotel to-night at eight. I'll get a private room," I said.

"Right oh!" said he, and we parted.

That evening at eight o'clock we met at the old Edinburgh Hotel (now no longer in existence), and after dinner he told me his very remarkable tale.

"Some years ago," he said, I was staying in a small coast town in Fife, not very far from St Andrews. I was painting some quaint houses and things of the sort that tickled my fancy at the time, and I was very much amused and excited by some of the bogie tales told me by the fisher folk. One story particularly interested me."

"And what was that?" I asked.

"Well, it was about a strange, dwarfish, old man, who, they

swore, was constantly wandering about among the rocks at nightfall; a queer, uncanny creature, they said, who was 'aye beckoning to them,' and who was never seen or known in the daylight. I heard so much at various times and from various people about this old man that I resolved to look for him and see what his game really was. I went down to the beach times without number, but saw nothing worse than myself, and I was almost giving the job up as hopeless, when one night 'I struck oil,' as the Yankees would say."

"Good," I said, "let me hear."

"It was after dusk," he proceeded, "very rough and windy, but with a feeble moon peeping out at times between the racing clouds. I was alone on the beach. Next moment I was *not* alone."

"Not alone," I remarked. "Who was there?"

"Certainly not alone," said Ashton. "About three yards from me stood a quaint, short, shrivelled, old creature. At that time the comic opera of 'Pinafore' was new to the stage-loving world, and this strange being resembled the character of 'Dick Deadeye' in that piece. But this old man was much uglier and more repulsive. He wore a tattered monk's robe, had a fringe of black hair, heavy black eyebrows, very protruding teeth, and a pale, pointed, unshaven chin. Moreover, he possessed only one eye, which was large and telescopic looking."

"What a horrid brute," I said.

"Oh! he wasn't half so bad after all," said Ashton, "though his appearance was certainly against him. He kept beckoning to me with a pale, withered hand, continually muttering, 'Come.' I felt compelled to follow him, and follow him I did."

I lit up another pipe and listened intently.

"He took me," resumed Ashton, "into a natural cave, a cleft in the rocks, and we went stumbling over the rocks and stones, and splashing into pools. At least I did. He seemed to get along all right. At the far end of this clammy cave, a very narrow staircase, cut out of solid rock, ascended abruptly about twenty or thirty steps, then turned a corner and descended again into a large passage. Then a mighty queer thing happened."

"What might that be?" I enquired.

"Well, my guide somehow or other suddenly became possessed of a huge great candlestick with a lighted candle in it, about three feet high, which lit up the vaulted passage.

"'We now stand in the monk's sub-way,' he said.

"'Indeed, and who may you be? Are you a man or a ghost?'

"The queer figure turned. 'I am human,' he said, 'do not fear me. I *was* a monk years ago, now I am reincarnate—time and space are nothing whatever to me. I only arrived a short while ago from Naples to meet you here.'

"Good heavens, Ashton," I said, "is this all true?"

"Absolutely true, my dear fellow," said Ashton. "I was in my sound senses, not hypnotised or anything of that sort, I assure you. On and on we went, the little man with his big candle leading the way, and I following. Two or three times the sub-way narrowed, and we had a tight squeeze to get through, I can tell you."

"What a rum place," I interjected.

"Yes, it was that," said Ashton, "but it got still rummer as we went up and down more stairs, and then popped through a hole into a lower gallery, and I noticed side passages branching off in several different directions.

"'Walk carefully and look where you tread,' said my monkish guide. 'There are pitfalls here; be very wary.'

"Then I noticed at my feet a deep, rock-hewn pit about two feet wide right across the passage. 'What is that for?' I asked. 'To trap intruders and enemies,' said the little monk. '*Look down.*' I did so, and I saw at the bottom, in a pool of water, a whitened skull and a number of bones. We passed four or five such shafts in our progress."

"Pon my word, this beats me altogether," I interpolated.

"It would have beaten me altogether if I had fallen into one of those traps," said Ashton. "Suddenly the close, damp, fungus sort of air changed and I smelt a sweet fragrant odour. 'I smell incense,' I said to the monk.

"'It is the wraith, or ghost, of a smell,' he said. 'There has been no incense hereaway since 1546. There are ghosts of sounds and smells, just as there are ghosts of people. We are

here surrounded by spirits, but they are transparent, and you cannot see them unless they are materialised, but you can feel them.'

"'Hush, hark!' said the monk, and then I heard a muffled sound of most beautiful chiming bells, the like I never heard before.

"'What is that?'

"'The old bells of St Andrews Cathedral. That is the ghost of sounds long ago ceased,' and the monk muttered some Latin. Then all of a sudden I heard very beautiful chanting for a moment or more, then it died away.

"'That is the long dead choir of monks chanting vespers,' remarked my guide, sadly.

"At this period the monk and I entered a large, rock-hewn chamber, wide and lofty. In it there were numerous huge old iron clamped chests of different sizes and shapes.

"'These,' said the monk, 'are packed full of treasures, jewels, and vestments. They will be needed again some day. Above us *now* there are ploughed fields, but long ago right over our heads there existed a church and monastery to which these things belonged.' He pointed with a skinny claw of a hand to one corner of the chamber. 'There,' he said, 'is the staircase that once led to the church above.'"

Ashton stopped and lit a cigar, then resumed.

"Well, on we went again, turning, twisting, going up steps, round corners, through more holes, and stepping over pitfall shafts. It was a loathsome and gruesome place.

"Out of a side passage I saw a female figure glide quickly along. She was dressed as a bride for a wedding; then she disappeared.

"'Fear not,' said the monk, 'that is Mirren of Hepburn's Tower, the White Lady, she can materialise herself and appear when she chooses, but she is not re-incarnate as I am.'

"Well, after we had gone on it seemed for hours, as I have described, the monk paused.

"'I fear I must leave you,' he said, suddenly. 'I am wanted. Before I go, take this,' and he placed in my hand a tiny gold cup delicately chased; 'it is a talisman and will

bring you good luck always,' he said. 'Keep it safe, I may never see you again here, but do not forget.'

"Then I was alone in black darkness. He and his candle had vanished in a second. Quite alone in that awful prison, heaven only knows how far below the ground, I could never have gone back, and I feared to go forward. I was entombed in a worse place than the Roman Catacombs, with no hope of rescue, as it was unknown and forgotten by all."

"What a fearful position to be in," I said.

"I should think it was," said Ashton. "The awful horror of it I can never forget as long as I live. I was absolutely powerless and helpless. I had lost my nerve, and I screamed aloud in an agony of mind. I had some matches, and these I used at rare intervals, crawling carefully and feeling my way along the slimy floor of the passage. I had a terrible feeling, too, that something intangible, but horrible, was crawling along after me and stopping when I stopped. I heard it breathing. I struck a match, and it was lucky, for I just missed another of those pitfalls. By the light of the match I saw a small shrine in an alcove which had once been handsomely ornamented. My progress forward was suddenly stopped by a gruesome procession of skeleton monks all in white. They crossed the main sub-way from one side passage and entered another. Their heads were all grinning skulls, and in their long bony fingers they bore enormous candles, which illuminated the passage with a feeble blue glare."

"It's awful," I remarked.

"On, and on, I slowly went. It seemed hours and hours. I was exhausted and hungry and thirsty. After a time I passed through open oak nail-studded doors that were rotting on their hinges, and then—*then*, I saw a *sight so horrible* that I would never mention it to anyone. I dare not, I may know its meaning some day—I hope so—"

"What on earth was it?" I inquired eagerly.

"For heaven's sake let me go on and do not ask about it," said Ashton, turning ghastly pale. "The horror of the whole thing so upset me that my foot slipped, and I fell down what seemed to be a steep stairway. As I struck the bottom I felt my left wrist snap, and I fainted. When I regained my

senses for a brief moment, I found that the White Lady, bearing a taper, was bending kindly over me. She had a lovely face, but as pale as white marble. She laid an icy cold hand on my hot brow, and then all was darkness again.

"Now listen! Next time I came to myself and opened my eyes I was out of the accursed passage. I saw the sky and the stars, and I felt a fresh breeze blowing. Oh! joy, I was back on the earth again, that I knew. I staggered feebly to my feet, and where on earth do you think I found I had been lying?"

"I cannot guess," I said.

"Just inside the archway of the old Pends gateway at St Andrews," said Ashton.

"How on earth did you get there?"

"Heaven knows," said Ashton, "I expect the White Lady helped me somehow. It all seemed like a fearful nightmare, but I had the gold cup in my pocket and my broken wrist to bear testimony to what I had gone through. To make a long story short, I went home to my people, where I lay for six long weeks suffering from brain fever and shock. I always carry the cup with me. I am not superstitious; but it brings me good luck *always*."

Ashton showed me the monk's gold cup. It was a beautiful little relic.

"Did you ever examine the place where you entered the passage?" I asked.

"Oh, yes," he replied, "I went there some years afterwards and found the cave, but it has all fallen in now."

"By Jove! It's very late, thanks for the dinner, I must be off. Good night."

I lit a pipe and pondered over that curious story. The entrance to the passage in the cave has fallen in; the exit from it in St Andrews is unknown to Ashton—only the White Lady knows.

On the whole, the story is wrapped in mystery, and does not help one much to unravel the wonders that lie in underground St Andrews. We may know some day or never.

The Hauntings and Mysteries of Lausdree Castle.

It is many years ago since I was on a walking tour in the Highlands, far to the north of Bonnie Glenshee; and when on the moorlands I was overtaken, for my sins, by a regular American snowstorm—a genuine blissard of the most pronounced type. I struggled along as well as I could for some considerable time, and then I became aware that someone was beside me. It was a young Highland lassie with a plaid over her head. I was pleased to learn from her that her name was "Jean," that she was the niece of a neighbouring innkeeper, and that she would speedily convey me to his haven of rest. We trudged along in the blinding snow without a word, and I was more than thankful to the lassie when I at last found myself out of the snow in a nice little sanded parlour with a glorious fire of peat and logs blazing on the hospitable hearth. A glass of something hot, brought by mine host, was most welcome.

I found there was one other storm-stayed traveller in the wee house, an old family butler, whose name I discovered was Jeremiah Anklebone. He had been on a visit to relations in the North, and had been caught in the snow like myself. We were both thankful to find such a warm, cosy shanty on such an inclement evening, and, to use a Scots term, we foregathered at the ingle inside.

He asked me if I knew much about spirits, to which I replied that I had just had a glass, but he at once explained that although not averse to toddy, he alluded to spirits of another nature, viz., ghosts, banshees, boggards, and the like.

I told him I had frequently been in so-called haunted places in various countries, but had never seen or heard anything

except owls, bats, rats, or mice.

He ventured the remark I had often heard before, that I could not be receptive, and I told him I was thankful that I was not.

He was a fine old fellow, an ideal family butler, and doubtless the recipient of many family secrets. He had big mutton-chop whiskers and a bald head, and looked as if he had served turtle soup all his life ; but it was *not* soup he was soaked with—he seemed fairly saturated with spook lore. He informed me, quite calmly, that he was gifted with the remarkable faculty of seeing apparitions, demons, etc.

I could not help remarking that it seemed a very unpleasant faculty to possess, but he quite differed with me, and got as warm as his toddy on the subject. I shall not in a hurry forget that wild evening in the Highland inn before that blazing fire, or the wonderful narrations I heard from Butler Anklebone. Space precludes me from putting down here *all* the marvels he revealed to me.

It seemed all his life—he was 62—he had been gasping like a fish on a river's bank to get into a really well-haunted house, but had utterly failed till he took the post of head butler at Lausdree Castle, which he informed me was but a short distance from St Andrews. He gave me a most tremendous description of the old castle, and from his account it seemed to be the asylum and gathering place of *all* the bogies in Britain and elsewhere. Congregated together there were the Ice Maid, the Brown Lady, a headless man, a cauld lad, a black maiden, the Flaming Ghost, the Wandering Monk, a ghost called Silky, auld Martha, a radiant bay, an iron knight, a creeping ghost, jumping Jock, old No-legs, Great Eyes, a talking dog, the Corbie Craw, a floating head, a dead hand, bleeding footprints, and many other curious creatures far too numerous to mention.

The Castle, he said, was full of uncouth and most peculiar sights and sounds, including rappings, hammerings, shrieks, groans, crashings, wailings, and the like.

"What a remarkable place," I said to Mr Butler Anklebone, "and how do you account for so many spectres in so limited an area ?"

"Oh! there is no time or space for them," he said, "they are earth-bound spirits, and can go from one part of the globe to another in a second; but they have their favourite haunts and meeting places just as we folks have, and Lausdree seems to appeal to their varied tastes."

He then went on to tell me some details of the Haunted Castle. "There are supposed to be," he said, "beneath the Castle splendid old apartments, dungeons, winding passages, and cellars; but history states that any of those persons who tried to investigate these mysteries *returned no more*, so the entrances were walled up and are now completely lost sight of.

"There is a built-up chamber, but no one durst open it, the penalty being total blindness or death, and such cases are on record. There is also a coffin room shaped exactly like its name; but one of the queerest places at Lausdree is a small apartment with a weird light of its own. At night this room can be seen from the old garden, showing a pale, uncanny, phosphorescent glow.

"Mr Snaggers—that's the footman—and I unlocked the door and examined the place carefully. There is a table, a sofa, and a few old chairs therein, and an all-pervading sickly light equally diffused. The furniture throws no shadows whatever. The room seemed very chilly, and there was a feeling as if all one's vitality was being sucked out of one's body, and drawing one's breath caused pain. Snaggers felt the same. No one could live long in that eerie apartment. I know we were glad to lock it up again.

"Then there is a spiral stair, called 'Meg's Leg.' I don't know the legend, but almost every night one hears her leg stumping up these steps."

"What a creepy place it must be, to be sure," I murmured, gravely.

"Yes!" said Anklebone, "and I tell you sir, Snaggers and I generally arranged to go up to bed together; one always felt there was something coming up the stairs behind one. When a person stopped, it stopped also, and one could hear it breathing and panting, but nothing was to be seen. Snaggers said one night when the candle went out he saw monstrous red eyes, but

I saw nothing then. The creeping creature I only saw twice, it was like an enormous toad on spider's legs. They say it has a human head and face, but I only saw its back. Some folks say it is alive and not a ghost, and that it hides somewhere in the cellars, but we never could get a trace of it. One night I was going down to the service room when my way was barred by a ghastly, tall figure, with great holes where eyes should have been, so I just shut my eyes and rushed through it downstairs. When I got down, I found all my clothes were covered with a vile, sickly-smelling sticky sort of oil, and I had to destroy them all."

'Go on, please," I said, "you astonish me vastly,"

"Yes," he said slowly, "it's all very queer. Lausdree is haunted and no mistake. Snaggers and I shared the same room. One night a great blood-stained hand and arm came round the corner of the bed curtain and tried to grab me. It was dead ice-cold too. Then a thing, an invisible thing, used to patter into the room, puffing and groaning, and get under the bed and heave it up, but we looked and there was never anything there, and the door locked too. We saw a great black corkscrew thing one night fall from the ceiling on to the floor and disappear, and then there was a mighty rush along the passage. Outside the door a great crash, a yell, and a groan dying away far below. There was a humorous spirit also, the Iron Knight. We called him 'Uncle.' He was up to tricks. We didn't mind him. When the fat cook was sitting down to a meal, he'd pull back her chair, and down she would come with a rare crash. If any of the maids upset a tray of tea-things, or fell downstairs with the kettle, or knocked over the great urn, they used to say—'Oh! That's Uncle again!'

I told him (Mr Anklebone) that I was delighted there was a touch of comedy in such a gruesome place, as I preferred comedians to ghosts any day. One thing I learnt from his story, and that was, that if he was head butler at Lausdree Castle, the head ghost was Sir Guy Ravelstocke, whose portrait still hung in the old picture gallery. The Castle dated back to Norman times, but about 1457 it fell into the hands of this Sir Guy Ravelstocke, who had been educated at the "Stadium

Generale," or University of Saint Andrews. He and his two friends, Geoffrey De Beaumanoir and Roger Le Courville, held high revel and carnival in the old halls of Lausdree, and were the terror of the whole countryside. Sir Guy was a dissolute fellow, a gambler, and everything else bad. The neighbours alleged that he had sold himself to Old Nick. He would spill blood as if it was water, and he and his white steed, "Nogo," were well known all over Fife and the Lothians. He was held to be a free-booter, a wizard and a warlock, a highwayman, a pirate, and a general desperado. He had slain many men in mortal combat, and was found invulnerable.

"He must have been a sort of Michael Scott of Balwearie," I remarked.

"He must have been a holy terror," said the butler. "I've seen him often, exactly like his portrait in the picture gallery. I've seen him in his old-world dress with his sword hanging at his side, sometimes on his white horse and sometimes on foot.

"There were always terrible knockings, shrieks, and crashes before he appeared, and all our dogs showed the greatest terror. I slept in an old four-poster bed, and he used to draw aside the curtain and glare at me constantly. He nearly always was accompanied by the spectre of a negro carrying his head under his arm. Sir Guy was a great traveller in foreign lands, and, I have been told, used to bring back all sorts of curious animals and insects with him. Perhaps that great toad thing I saw was one of the creatures. I've heard toads live for ages.

I said I believed that was quite true.

"I found a queer place one day," said Anklebone. "I was going up the turret staircase, and found some of the steps moved back. I got Mr Snaggers and Darkgood, the gardener, and we tugged them out. We called the master, and then we found narrow steps going down to a locked door. We forced it open, and got into a stone chamber. There were skulls and bones all over the place. Most of them belonged to animals, but there was a horrible thing on the floor, a sort of mummified vampire bat, with huge teeth and enormous outstretched wings, like thick parchment, and four legs. Perhaps it was a regular

vampire. They fanned folks to sleep with their great wings, and then sucked their blood dry. We cleared out the room, and buried all the things in a wood.

"Now," said Anklebone, "I will tell you the end of Sir Guy Ravelstocke. He brought back with him from them foreign parts a nigger servant, and they called him the 'Apostle,' Well, one night," continued Anklebone, "he and his chums were dining, and full of wine, and the 'A—Postal' offended them somehow, and Sir Guy stabbed him. Then they chained his hands and feet together, took him to the dungeon, and filled his mouth, nose, and ears full of clay and left him. That is the nigger ghost I saw always with Sir Guy—the murdered negro.

"About two years after, Sir Guy and his friends were in the same room drinking when there came a great hammering at the Castle door. Sir Guy drew his sword, flung open the door, and plunged out into the darkness. A few moments passed then his friends rushed out on hearing wild unearthly shrieks, but there was no Sir Guy to be seen, he had totally disappeared, and was never heard of or seen in life again. We found his remains three years ago, but I will tell you of that directly. One day Snaggers and I had gone to St Andrews to buy things. We were just at the end of South Street when a horseman dashed past us at full gallop. 'Heavens,' said Snaggers, 'it's Sir Guy as I live.' He went bang into the big iron gates at the Cathedral. When we came up the great gates were locked, and there was Sir Guy leaning up against the west gable scowling at us, but the white horse had gone, and he melted away as we looked. I saw him again with the negro at Magus Muir, and alone one dark night in North Street.

"I was alone one evening in the room below the banquet hall at Lausdree and heard a pattering on the table. On looking up I saw a stain in the ceiling, and drops of blood were dropping down on the table and the floor. The room above was the very place where the negro was stabbed. Next morning we went into the room where I saw the blood drip, and there was the mark of a bloody hand on the table, but no stain on the roof.

"Now for the discovery. I had often dreamed about an old overgrown well there was in the gardens, and felt very sus-

picious of what might be therein. Then the gardener and the woodman told me they had frequently seen the awful spectre of Sir Guy and the 'Apostle' hovering round about the thicket that enclosed what was known as the haunted well, and then vanish in the brushwood without disturbing it. I felt sure that there lay the mystery of Sir Guy Ravelstocke. This idea was soon after confirmed by a curious occurrence. One morning Snaggers was dusting an old oil painting over the huge mantelpiece, and above the weeping stone in the great hall, when somehow or other he contrived to touch a secret spring and the painting flew back, open in its frame, and revealed a chamber beyond.

"We sent for master, and got down by some steps into the room. Such a queer place! It was octagonal in shape, and there had been either a great fire or an explosion there. The vaulted stone roof and floor were all blackened and cracked, and the fireplace and wood-panelling were all burnt and charred."

"Perhaps the chapel," I remarked.

"That is what master said," replied the butler, "and there were remains of burnt tapestry, charred wood, and documents all over the stone floor. Master got one piece of burnt paper with faded writing on it in some foreign tongue. The odd thing was the big picture. The eyes were sort of convex-like, and two holes were bored in the pupil of each of its eyes, so that anyone standing up on top of the stone stairs could see all that took place in the great hall below, and hear also.

"Master took the piece of parchment and managed to make out a few words. They were—'I am sure that Ravelstocke lies in the old Prior's Well, with the dead nigger servant we placed there. I would not go near that spot for my life. Heaven grant *it* may not come for me, I must leave the place.' That was all he could decipher on the burnt paper.

"'We must explore that Prior's Well (evidently that is its name) to-morrow morning,' said our master. We were all up at dawn, and got all the men available to cut down the shrubs, bushes, and the undergrowth round the well, the growth of ages. When the well was exposed it looked very like the holy well at St Andrews, only it had been very finely carved and ornamen-

ted at one time. The entrance was a Norman archway, and the remains of an oak door still hung there. We found a shallow bath shaped pool of muddy water inside, and a lot of broken stones and bits of old statues and glass. At the far end was a large square opening a few feet above the pool of water. We, of course, made for this, and found there was a cell beyond. The whole well on one side was riven and rent, either by lightning or the effects of an earthquake shock. If that ancient well could have spoken it would have told us as queer tales as St Rule's Tower at St Andrews. There was a most curious, overpowering, sickening odour inside the place, like a vault or charnel house."

I remarked that I knew no smells worse than acetylene gas or the awful smell I unearthed when digging, long ago, opposite the St Andrews Cathedral.

"Well," said Anklebone, "I can't imagine a worse odour than there was beside that Prior's Well. It turned us all so faint. We had to get some brandy. We got into the far cell, and there were two skeleton bodies on the flagged floor. One was a blanched skeleton as far as the neck, but the skull was well preserved, and matted black hair still clung on it and round the jaws. All the teeth were in their place. Some rings had fallen from the bony fingers, and a sword, all eaten away by rust, lay beside the skeleton. The other was like a mummified ape, of a dark oak colour, the nails on the fingers and toes being quite perfect. Chains, also almost worn away, hung round the feet and hands.

"'Good Heavens,' said master, 'it is Sir Guy Ravelstocke and the murdered Apostle!' There was no doubt of that whatever. We had them removed and buried at once. The mystery was solved after all these long years.

"The nigger had been placed there, but the mystery of Sir Guy was inexplicable. *Who came for him* that night when he rushed out of the door of Lausdree Castle, centuries ago, with his sword, and who carried him to his doom in the Friar's Well? No one can answer that terrible question now. Oh! that the old well could speak and reveal its secret."

A Haunted Manor House and the Duel at St Andrews;

OR,

The Old Brown Witch.

This can hardly be termed a St Andrews ghost story, but it is so remarkably strange and weird that I have been specially requested to add it to the series, and there is an allusion to St Andrews in it after all.

Several years ago we had in the Golf Club at Cambridge a Russian Prince who took up golf, and the questions of spirits, bogies, witches, banshees, death warnings, and the like, equally strongly. He was a firm disbeliever in all of them, and belonged to a Phantasmalogical Research Society to inquire into and expose all such things. I frequently have long letters from him from all sorts of remote parts of the world where he is investigating tales of haunted houses, churchyards, and so on; but from this, his last letter, he sems to have contrived to meet a *genuine* and very unpleasant sort of spectre. Of course I suppress all names.

"X———x Manor,
Feb.——, 1905.

Dear W. T. L.,—Well, here I am, actually in a really haunted manor house at last, and I have had a most horribly, weird, and uncanny experience of a most loathsome appearance. I have been here a fortnight now—such a queer, great old house, all turrets and towers, and damp wings covered with ivy and creepers, and such small, narrow windows. It is on a slight elevation, and has in bygone days had a moat around it. It is surrounded

by dense woods, and there is a black-looking lake at the back. The staircases are all stone and very narrow, and there is an old chapel and a coffin room in the house. In the garden, in a yew avenue, is a vault and a tombstone, and thereby hangs my curious tale.

It seems that centuries ago a very unpleasant old widow lady, and a very unpleasant son, had the old house. She was a very ugly and eccentric creature, and a miser, and was nicknamed by the village folk "The Brown Witch." The tales about her ongoings told to this day are most remarkable. It seems her son, who, according to all accounts, was a shocking bad lot, was killed in a duel, and the old lady died shortly afterwards a *raving maniac.*

She seems to have left a very curious will. I deal with only two details in it. One was that the chamber in which she lived and died was for ever to be left *untouched* and *undisturbed,* but *unlocked,* or the disturber would be cursed with instant blindness and ultimately death. The second was that she was to be buried in the vault in the yew avenue that she had specially made for her remains; that she was to be dressed in her usual clothes and bonnet, and that she must be placed in a tightly-sealed *glass coffin,* so as to be visible to any intruder. My host told me the chamber or the vault in the grounds had never been interfered with, but that her appearances had been very frequent to most credible witnesses, and that such appearances all portended some dire calamity to some one.

She had appeared and terrified many visitors, both in the house and in the grounds. She had also been seen by the village pastor and by the servants. He had never seen her himself, but he had taken every measure he could think of to unravel the mystery, but in vain. The outdoor servants were terrified, and would never remain, and one lady visitor had been nearly driven mad by seeing her peering in at the window at dusk.

Of course, I laughed the tale to scorn, and also the story of the alarm bell which tolled at intervals without any apparent or human agency. Not even the bravest would dare to walk down the yew avenue after nightfall.

Well, I had been ten days in the house before anything

happened. I must say, the wind and the rats, and owls and bats, and the tapping noise of the ivy on the old windows at night were rather creepy, but nothing really out of the common happened till the other night.

My room was in a long, narrow, old gallery. After cards and billiards, and at about 12.30, I was going off to my well-earned rest, and was getting near my door in the gallery, when I saw a faint light coming towards me round a corner. I went into my room and waited to see who was wandering about so late at night. Then a figure stopped at my door, evidently carrying a lighted old lantern. I raised my candle to have an inspection, and then, oh! horror!—I staggered back for a moment, for before me clearly stood the horrible figure of the old "Brown Witch," A cold sweat broke out all over me.

Far, far worse than the description. I saw her brown robe and the poke bonnet, the horrible face, the huge black sockets of the eyes without eyeballs, the nose gone, and, worst of all, that fearful grin, the cruel grin of a maniac, a wicked, terrible face.

I opened my drawer and seized my always loaded revolver. I shouted loudly, and fired *once, twice, thrice.* She never moved; only the horrible mocking smile grew wider and more devilish. I rushed forward, slammed my door to shut out the awful sight, and then collapsed back into a chair.

I must have hit it each time for certain. An offensive charnel house smell pervaded the air. Then the door flew open, and my host and several men and servants rushed into the room, anxiously asking what was the matter, and why I fired? I told them everything. We found the three bullet shots in the wall opposite my door. They *must* have passed through that abominable horror.

Need I say I spent a wretched night? In fact, I sat up and never went to bed at all. I resolved to leave next day early, but before doing that I determined at all hazards, to go into that vault and see what it contained. and also to carefully investigate the "Brown Witch's" chamber without disturbing anything in it. I told my host next day at breakfast what I proposed doing, and he offered no objection whatever, but declined

absolutely to go near the vault or chamber himself, or to let any of his household do so.

"Oh! by-the-by, did you ring the alarm bell in the tower last night?" he asked me. "It was the sound of your shots and the great bell ringing immediately afterwards that brought me along so quickly to your room. We all heard it."

I told him I knew nothing of it and never even heard the bell.

"I thought that," he said, "for you were nearly off in a faint when we all came in, and hardly knew us for a bit."

"I can't make out the bell," said my host, "or what on earth can make it ring so. It has no rope, and it cannot possibly be the wind. I must have it removed. Last time it rung loudly like that, my old housekeeper was found dead in her bed in the morning."

To make a long story short, the next thing I did was to get a couple of labourers to shovel away the earth and find the lid of the old vault in the yew avenue. This was soon done, and we quickly descended into the place with lights. We found ourselves in a large-built, clammy chamber, and on the floor lay a tattered and broken old lantern. At first we thought the chamber was empty, but all of a sudden we noticed a niche at one end and at once went forward to it. In this singular alcove was a large glass box, or coffin, standing on its end, and in it and standing upright was the horrible eyeless mummy (still arrayed in the brown robe and poke bonnet) of the terrible creature I had seen in the gallery, and with the same mocking, grinning mouth and the huge ugly teeth. The same smell I have told you of before pervaded the whole place.

She was hermetically sealed up in this ghastly glass coffin and preserved. We were all very glad to leave that charnel-house and cover it up out of sight, but not out of memory. That would be perfectly impossible to any of us. I can't get that smell out of my nose yet. It would sicken you.

Next, I went to the chamber with a friend and my bicycle lantern to investigate. It was up a long, narrow stone stair. The old oak door (it was unlocked, as I said before) soon yielded to our combined efforts and creaked open, and we stood in a room

of the middle ages. The old shutters were tightly closed. The ceiling, which had once been handsomely painted, was rapidly falling away, and the tapestry was rotting off the walls. It had evidently once been a splendid apartment, but now it was given up to rats and moths and spiders and damp. It chilled one to the very marrow, and it had that same horrible smell. There was a four-poster bed in one corner with rags and shreds of curtains, probably where the old creature had died. The tables and chairs were covered with the dust of ages. There was no carpet of any kind. An old spinet stood against the wall; and papers were lying all over the place inches deep in dust. A few charred logs of wood lay in the gaping old fireplace with its old-time chimney corners, and there seemed to be bits of valuable old china and bric-a-brac about the place. Many pictures had fallen off the walls, but a few faded pencil drawings were still in their places. Just guess my surprise and astonishment when I found they were Scottish views—one of Edinburgh, one of Crail Church, and three of St Andrews, including the old College and Chapel, the Castle, and St Leonards College, with date 1676. Here was another most curious thing I determined to ask about before I left. However, I touched nothing in the room, as I had promised my host, and besides—you will laugh—I had no wish to be stricken with the "Brown Witch's" promised curse of blindness and ultimate death to any intruder who touched her things. I dreaded her far too much since I had seen her in the gallery and in her tomb, and heard of her bewitched alarm bell, which protended death to some one.

Before I left, I mentioned the Scottish drawings in the witch's room to my host, and asked him if he could throw any light on how they came there.

Briefly, it seems that she (the witch) sent her son far away in those old days to a Scottish University, and St Andrews was her choice. It seems he was very quarrelsome in his cups, and frequently fought duels, and generally proved the victor. One of the last he fought at Sauchope Stone, near Crail, with a nephew of the Laird of Balcomie Castle, and they fought with broadsword and buckler, and again the "Witch's" son killed his man. His last duel was fought on St Andrews sands with rapiers, and

he was run through the heart—a good job.

Now I must conclude. I am determined to investigate further the whole most mysterious affair. If you ever visit this place, my host, Mr ———, says he will let you explore the vault in the yew avenue, and see the coffin and the old witch, and you may also go and look at the chamber. If you ever do, take the advice of an old friend and do not *dare* to touch anything therein.

YOUR FRIEND TO COMMAND.

The Apparition of the Prior of Pittenweem.

It was in September 1875 that I first met dear old Captain Chester (now gone to his rest); and it was very many years before that date that he rented his fearsomely haunted old house in St Andrews.

I was a Cambridge boy when I met him—how the undergraduates scorn that term "boy." He told me the following queer tales in the Poppledorf Avenue at Bonn when I was on holiday.

The house he rented at St Andrews, from his accounts, must have been a most unpleasant and eerie dwelling. Rappings and hammerings were heard all over the house after nightfall, trembling of the walls, quiverings. Heavy falls and ear-piercing shrieks were also part of the nightly programme.

I suggested bats, rats, owls, and smugglers as the cause, which made the old man perfectly wild with rage, and caused him to use most unparliamentary language.

I pointed out that such language would probably have scared away any respectable ghost. However, let me tell the story in his own peculiar way.

"My brother and I took the house, sir," he said, "and we had a nephew and some nieces with us. There were also three middle-aged English servants at the time; and, gadsooth, sir, they had strange names. The cook possessed the extraordinary name of Maria Trombone, the housemaid was called Jemima Podge, and the other old cat was called Teresa Shadbolt.

"One evening I was sitting smoking in my study, when the door flew open with a bang and Maria rushed in.

"'Zounds! Mrs Trombone,' I said, 'how dare you come

into my room like this ? '

" ' Well, sir,' she said, ' there are *hawful* things going on to-night. I'm *frighted* to death. I was washing hup, please sir, when something rushed passed me with a rustle, and I got a great smack on the cheek with a damp. cold hand, and then the place shook, and all the things clattered like anything.'

" ' Nonsense, Trombone,' I said, ' you were asleep, or have you been drinking, eh ? '

" ' Lor' bless you, sir, no ! never a drop ; but last night, sir, Teresa Shadbolt had all the bedclothes pulled off her bed twice, sir, and Jane said a tall old man in a queer dressing-gown came into her room and brushed his white beard over her face, and, lor', sir, didn't you hear her a-screamin' ? '

" ' No, I'm hanged if I did. You must all be stark, staring mad, you know.'

" ' Not a bit of us, master,' continued Mrs Trombone. ' There is something wrong about this blessed house—locked doors and windows fly wide open, and the bells keep ringin' at all hours of the night, and we hear steps on the stairs when everyone is in bed, and knocks, and crashes, and screams. Then the tables and things go moving about. No Christian could put up with it, please sir. *We must all leave.*'

" Well, I got all those women up, and they told me deuced queer things, but I squared them up at last."

" How ? " I inquired.

" I doubled their wages, sir, and I told them they might all sleep in one room upstairs together, and I promised them a real good blow-out at Christmas, and so on.

" Next my nephew and little nieces saw the old man with the long white beard at various times in the passages and on the stairs. Oddly enough, my little nieces got quite accustomed to see the aged man with the grey beard, and were not a bit timid. They said he was just like the pictures of old Father Christmas, and he looked kind.

" I never saw him," continued Chester, " till one All Hallows Night, or Hallowe'en as they termed it in St Andrews ; but I will speak of that later on."

" Go on," I said, " it is very interesting indeed to me."

"The servants all saw him at times, and that old arch fiend, Trombone, was constantly getting frightened, and breaking things and fainting. I was myself annoyed by strange unearthly sounds when sitting smoking at night late. There were curious rollings and rumblings under the house, like enormous stone balls being bowled along, then a heavy thud followed by intolerable silence. Then there was a curious sound like muffled blinds being quickly drawn up and down; that and a sort of flapping and rustling seemed to pervade the air.

"This perplexed me, and I got in a detective; but he found out nothing at all. After much trouble and research I learned of the legend of the Prior of Pittenweem and his connection with the old house.

"It seems when Moray and his gang of plunderers shut up St Monance Church and the old Priory of Pittenweem, the last Prior (not Forman or Rowles), a very old man, was cut adrift, and for some months lay hidden at Newark Castle, food being brought him by some former monks. Newark Castle was burned, and this old Prior fled to Balcomie Castle. From there he went to Kinkell Cave near St Andrews.

"I know all those places well," I said.

"After some weeks, and when winter came, he took refuge in the very old house in which I lived. He seems to have been among both friends and foes there, and brawls were quite common things within those walls.

"One night those long dead and forgotten old-world inhabitants were startled from their slumbers by shots, the clashing of arms, and wild yells. To make a long tale short, that old Prior of Pittenweem was never seen by human eyes after that fearful night.

"Many suspected foul play, but in those times it was deemed best to keep one's mouth shut tight, and what mattered it if an old Prior disappeared?

"They were awful times those," I said. "Glad we live in these days."

"Well, now," said the Captain, "I must come to the night of All Hallows E'en, or Holy Even, when the spirits of the night are said to wander abroad, We dined early in those days, and

after dinner I walked down to an old Clubhouse in Golf Place, of which I was an hon. member, to play cards. It was a perfect night, and a few flakes of snow had begun to fall, and the wind was keen and sharp. When I left the Club later the ground was well covered with snow, but the storm had ceased, and the moon and stars were shining bright in a clear sky. By Jove, sir, it was like fairyland, and all the church towers and house tops were glittering in the moonbeams.

"I wandered about the old place for fully an hour. It was lovely. I was reluctant to go indoors. Gad, sir, I got quite sad and poetical. I thought of my poor sister who died long ago and is buried in Stefano Rodundo at Rome, and lots of other things. Then I thought of St Andrews as it is and what it might have been. I thought of all its holy temples, erected by our pious forefathers, and its altars and statues lying desolate, ruined and profaned.

"At last I arrived at my own door, and entered—in a thoughtful mood. I went to my study and put on my slippers and dressing gown. I had just sat down and commenced reading when there came a most tremendous shivering crash. I involuntarily cowered down. I thought the roof had fallen—at least, gad, sir, I was flabbergasted. It woke everyone. The crash was followed by a roaring sound."

"It must have been an earthquake, Captain Chester," I said.

"Zounds, sir, I don't know what it was. I thought I was killed. Then my nephew and I got a lamp and examined the house.

"Everything was right—nothing to account for the fearful noise. Finally, we went downstairs to the vaulted kitchens. Zounds, sir, all of a sudden my nephew gripped my arm, and with a cry of abject terror pointed to the open kitchen door. 'Oh, look there, look there!' he almost screamed.

"I looked, and, gad, I got a queer turn. There facing us in the open doorway was a very tall, shaven-headed old man with a long grey beard. He had a white robe or cassock on, a linen rocket, and, above all, an almuce or cloak of black hue lined with ermine—*The Augustinian Habit.* In one hand he

held a very large rosary, and he lent on a stout cudgel.

"As I advanced he retreated backwards, always beckoning to me—and I followed lamp in hand. I *had* to follow—could not help myself. Do you know the way a serpent can fascinate or hypnotise its prey before it devours them ?

"Yes," I said, "I have seen the snakes at the Zoo do that trick."

"Well, sir, I was hypnotised like that—precisely like that. He beckoned and I followed.

"Suddenly I saw a little door in the corner of the kitchen standing open—a door I had never noticed before. The shadowy vision backed towards it. Still I followed. Then he entered its portals. As I advanced he grew more and more transparent, and finally melted away, and the heavy door shut upon him with a tremendous crash and rattle. The lamp fell from my trembling hand and was shattered to fragments on the stone floor. I was in pitch darkness—silence reigned—I don't remember how I got out to the light again.

"Next morning early I got in some workmen and took them down to the kitchen, direct to the corner where the door was through which the apparition vanished the previous night.

"Zounds, sir, there was *no door there*—only the white plastered wall. I was dumbfoundered. 'Mrs Trombone,' I said to the cook, 'where the devil is that door gone ?'"

"'The door, sir,' said the cook, 'there ain't no door there that I ever saw.'

"'Trombone,' I replied, 'don't tell falsehoods—you're a fool.'

"I made the men set to work and tear down the plaster and stuff, and, egad, sir, in an hour we found the door—a thick oak, nail studded, iron clamped old door. It took some time to force it open, and then down three steps we found ourselves in a chamber with mighty thick walls and with a flagged floor, about six feet square, lit by a small slit of a window.

"'Tear up the flags,' I said.

"They did so, and there was only earth below.

"'Dig down,' I said, 'dig like thunder,'

"In about an hour we came to a huge flag with a ring in

it. Up it came, and below it was a dryly-built bottle-shaped well.

"We went down with lights. What do you think we found at the bottom of it?

"Perhaps water," I suggested.

"Water be d——," said Captain Chester, "we found the mouldering skeleton of a very tall man in a sitting posture. Beside him lay a large rosary and a stout oak cudgel—the rosary and cudgel I had seen in the phantom's hands the previous night. My friend, I *had solved the problem*—that was the skeleton of the old Prior of Pittenweem who vanished in that house hundreds of years ago."

The True Tale of the Phantom Coach.

THE great curtain had fallen after the pantomime, and I was standing chatting on the stage of the theatre at Cambridge when one of the stage men came to tell me I was wanted at the stage door and I must hurry up at once. Thither I proceeded, and found a lot of golfing boys, hunting boys, dramatic boys, and all sorts of other merry 'Varsity boys, who shouted out "Come along quick to the Blue Pig" (the "Blue Pig" is a Cambridge name for the Blue Boar Hotel), "we want you to meet a fellow called Willie Carson, and there is to be supper, and he has something to tell us. The 'Bogie Man' has gone on there now, so come right away."

Well, off we went to the Blue Boar Hotel, and we found Carson sitting over a blazing fire, with a capital supper set in his nice old-fashioned room, lit up with candles only, the picture of comfort—outside it was snowing hard and bitterly cold.

After a talk over the merits of the pantomime, we did full justice to a most excellent supper, and then crowded round the blazing hearth to hear a story our host wanted to tell us.

"Did you ever hear of the Phantom Coach at St Andrews?" he asked, turning to me suddenly and removing his cigar.

"Often," I replied, "I have heard most extraordinary yarns about it from lots of people; but why do you ask?"

"Because *I've seen it*," he replied, softly and thoughtfully. "Some five years ago, it was very, very strange, not to be forgotten and quite unexplainable; that is why I asked you here to-night. I wanted to talk to you about it." He stooped over the fire and was silent for a few minutes.

"Tell us all about it," we all shouted at once, "we won't make fun of it."

"There is nothing to make fun of; indeed, it's a true, solemn fact," he said. "Listen, and I will try to tell you what I saw, but I can't half picture it properly. Five years ago I had just come home from America. I went to stay at St Andrews for some golf. I think it was the latter end of August, and I must have been in the town about a week at least, when one night—it was hot and stuffy, and about midnight—I determined to take a good long country walk, and struck out right along the road to Strathkinness.

"It was a hot, dark, and stormy night, not wet; fitful black clouds floated now and again at a rapid pace over the moon, which now and then shone out brightly; in the distance the sea made a perpetual moan, and at intervals the dark eastern sky was lit up by flashes of summer wildfire lightning over the distant Cathedral towers.

"Now and again I could hear the mutter of far-away thunder, and there were incessant gusts of wind. I must have been about two miles along the road, when I could discern some very large object approaching me rapidly. As it came nearer I noticed it resembled a coach, dark, heavy, primitive; it seemed to have four large black horses, and the driver was a muffled, shapeless figure. It approached with a low humming or buzzing sound, which was most peculiar and unpleasant to hear. The horses made a hollow kind of ticking sound with their feet, otherwise it was noiseless.

"No earthly coach of the kind could go without any ordinary sound. It was weird and eerie in the extreme. As it passed me the moon shone out brightly, and I saw for a second a ghastly white face at the coach window; but I saw those four strange, silent black horses, the more extraordinary, tall, swaddled-up shapeless driver, and the quaint black, gloomy old coach, with a coffin-shaped box on the roof, only far, far too well. One most remarkable thing was that it *threw no shadow* of any kind.

"Just at it passed me there was a teriffic roar of thunder, and a blaze of lightning that nearly blinded me, and in the distance I saw that horrible ghastly receding coach; then clouds came over the moon and all was black—a darkness one

could feel, a darkness of a shut-up smothering vault. I felt sick and dazed for a minute or two. I could not make out if I had been struck by the lightning or was paralysed. However, after a bit it passed off; it was a horrible deathly feeling while it lasted. I never experienced a similar sensation before or since, and hope I never may again. Another very curious thing was the behaviour of my favourite collie dog, usually frightened at nothing, on the approach of the phantom (for phantom it was). He crouched down, shivering and whining, and as it drew nearer fled with a bark like a screech, and cowered down in the ditch at the roadside and gave forth low growls.

"I tell you, boys, it's all right in this room to talk about it, but none of you would have liked to be in my place that queer, uncanny night on that lonely road. That it was supernatural, I am convinced; it is a very thin veil between us and the unseen world of spirits.

"They say I possess a seventh sense, namely, second sight, and I know I shall never forget that night's experience.

"But listen—the story is not ended yet. Next morning a telegram arrived from my brother in Kent, 'Are you all right?' I wondered much, and wired back that I was very well.

"The following day a letter came from my brother giving me a curious explanation.

"The following afternoon of the day I saw the coach, my brother was looking out of the old manor house windows in Kent, when he and several others noticed a large bird, having most peculiar plumage, seated on the garden wall. No one had ever seen a bird of the kind before. He was rushing off for a gun to shoot it, when our father, who looked very white and scared, stopped him. 'Do not shoot,' he said, 'it would be of no use. That is the bird of ill omen to all our race, it only appears before a death. I have only once seen it before—that week your dear mother died.'

"My brother was so alarmed at this that he sent the wire I have mentioned to me at St Andrews. By the next mail from Australia we learned that our eldest brother had died there the very day I saw the coach at St Andrews and my brother saw the bird at our old home in Kent. Very odd, is it not; but what

do you know about that coach ? "

" Only tales," I said. " Many people swear they have heard it, or seen it, on stormy nights. I know a girl who swears to it, and also a doctor who passed it on the road, and it nearly frightened his horse to death and him too.

" The tale of the two tramps is funny. They were trudging into St Andrews one wild stormy night when this uncanny coach overtook them. It stopped ; the door opened, and a white hand beckoned towards them. One tramp rushed up and got in, then suddenly the door noiselessly shut and the coach moved off, leaving the other tramp alone in the pitiless wind and rain. ' I never saw my old mate again,' said the tramp, when he told the tale, ' and I never shall—that there old coach was nothing of this here world of ours, it took my old mate off to Davy Jones's locker mighty smart, poor fellow.'

" They say his body was found in the sea some months afterwards, and the tale goes that the phantom coach finishes its nocturnal journey in the waves of St Andrews Bay."

" Whose coach is it ? " asked all that were in the room.

" I cannot say ; some say Bethune, others Sharpe, and others Hackston ; I do not know who is supposed to be the figure inside, unless it is his Satanic Majesty himself. At all events, it seems a certain fact that a phantom coach has been seen from time to time on the roads round St Andrews. I have never seen any of these things myself."

" Well," said Carson, " that awful coach *does appear ;* it appeared to me, and, doubtless, in the course of time will appear to many others. It bodes no one any good, and I pity with all my heart anyone who meets it. Beware of those roads late at night, or, like me, you may some day to your injury meet that ghastly, uncanny, old phantom coach. If so, you will remember it to your dying day."

" Curious thing that about seeing the coach and the bird at the same time, and in two places so far apart," murmured the golfing Johnny, " and then Carson's brother dying too."

" I'd sooner see the bird than the coach," said one.

" Guess I'd rather not see either of them," said an American present, " glad we have no phantom coaches in Yankeeland."

The Veiled Nun of St Leonards.

Curiously enough, although I have been in many old haunted castles and churches (at the exactly correct hour, viz., midnight) in Scotland, England, Wales, and the Rhine country, yet I have never been able to either see or hear a ghost of any sort. The only thing of the kind I ever saw was an accidental meeting with the far-famed "Spring-heeled Jack" in a dark lane at Helensburgh. It was many years ago, and as I was then very small and he was of immense proportions, the meeting was distinctly unpleasant for me.

Now, from legends we learn that St Andrews is possessed of a prodigious number of supernatural appearances of different kinds, sizes, and shapes—most of them of an awe-inspiring and blood curdling type. In fact, so numerous are they—80 in number they seem to be—that there is really no room for any modern aspirants who may want a quiet place to appear and turn people's hair white. It might be well to mention a few of them before telling the tale of "The Veiled Nun of St Leonards Church Avenue."

We will put aside ordinary banshees and things that can only be heard. Well, there is the celebrated Phantom Coach that Willie Carson told us of. It has been heard and seen by many. There is also a white lady that used to haunt the Abbey Road, the ghost of St Rule's Tower, the Haunted Tower ghost, the Blackfriars ghost, the wraith of Hackston of Rathillet, the spectre of the old Castle, the Dancing Skeletons, the smothered Piper Lad, the Phantom Bloodhound, the Priory Ghost, and many, many more. The Nun of St Leonards is as curious and interesting as any of them, though

a bit weird and gruesome. In the time of charming Mary Stuart, our white Queen, there lived in the old South Street a very lovely lady belonging to a very old Scottish family, and her beauty and wit brought many admirers to claim her hand, but with little or no success. She waved them all away. At last she became affianced to a fine and brave young fellow who came from the East Lothian country, and for some months all went merrily as a marriage bell, but at last clouds overspread the rosy horizon. She resolved that she would never become an earthly bride, but would take the veil and become a bride of Holy Church—a nun, in point of fact. When her lover heard that she had left home and entered a house of Holy Sisters, he at once announced his intention of hastening to St Andrews, seizing her, and marrying her at once. In this project it would seem the young lady's parents were in perfect agreement with the devoted youth. He did hasten to St Andrews almost immediately, and there received a terrible shock. On meeting this once lovely and loved maiden, he discovered that she had actually done what she had written and threatened to do. Sooner than be an earthly bride she had mutilated her face by slitting her nostrils; she had cut off her eyelids and both her top and bottom lips, and had branded her fair cheeks with cruel hot irons.

The poor youth, on seeing her famous beauty thus destroyed, fled to Edinburgh, where he committed suicide, and she, after becoming a nun, died from grief and remorse. That all happened nearly 400 years ago; but her spirit with the terribly marred and mutilated face still wanders o' nights in the peaceful little avenue to old St Leonards iron kirk gate down the Pends Road. She is all dressed in black, with a long black veil over the once lovely face, and carries a lantern in her hand. Should any bold visitor to that avenue meet her, she slowly sweeps her face veil aside, raises the lantern to her scarred face, and discloses those awful features to his horrified gaze. Here is a curious thing that I know happened there a few years ago.

I knew a young fellow here who was reading up theology and Church canon law. I also knew a great friend of his, an old Cambridge man. The former I will call Wilson, and the latter

Talbot, as I do not want to give the exact names. Well, Wilson had invited Talbot up to St Andrews for a month of golf, and he arrived here on a Christmas day. He came to my rooms for about ten minutes, and I never saw any one merrier and brighter and full of old days at Cambridge. Then he hurried off to see the Links and the Club. Late that evening Wilson rushed in. "Come along quick and see Talbot; he's awfully ill, and I don't know what's up a bit," I went off and found Talbot in his lodgings with a doctor in attendance, and he certainly looked dangerously ill, and seemed perfectly dazed. Wilson told me that he had to go to see some people on business that evening down by the harbour, and that he took Talbot with him down the Pends Road. It was a fine night, and Talbot said he would walk about the road and enjoy a cigar till his friend's return. In about half-an-hour Wilson returned up the Pends Road, but could see Talbot nowhere in sight. After hunting about for a long time, he found him leaning against the third or fourth tree up the little avenue to St Leonards kirk gate.

He went up to him, when Talbot turned a horrified face towards him, saying, "Oh, my God, have you come to me again?" and fell down in a fit or a swoon. He got some passers-by to help to take poor Talbot to his rooms. Then he came round for me. We sat up with him in wonder and amazement; and, briefly, this is what he told us. After walking up and down the Pends Road, he thought he would take a survey of the little avenue, when at the end he saw a light approaching him, and he turned back to meet it. Thinking it was a policeman, he wished him "Good evening," but got no reply. On approaching nearer he saw it to be a veiled female with a lantern. Getting quite close, she stopped in front of him, drew aside her long veil, and held up the lantern towards him. "My God," said Talbot, "I can never forget or describe that terrible, fearful face. I felt choked, and I fell like a log at her feet. I remember no more till I found myself in these rooms, and you two fellows sitting beside me. I leave this place to-morrow"—and he did by the first train. His state of panic was terrible to see. Neither Wilson nor Talbot had ever heard the tale of

the awful apparition of the St Leonards nun, and I had almost forgotten the existence of the strange story till so curiously reminded of it. I never saw Talbot again, but I had a letter from him a year after written from Rhienfells, telling me that on Christmas day he had had another vision, dream, or whatever it was, of the same awful spectre. About a year later I read in a paper that poor old Talbot had died on Christmas night at Rosario of heart failure. I often wonder if the dear old chap had had another visit from the terrible Veiled Nun of St Leonards Avenue.

The Monk of St Rule's Tower.

SOME years ago I was perfectly surrounded with crowds of bonny children in the St Albans Holborn district of London. I fancy they belonged to some guild or other, and they enacted the part of imps, fairies, statues, &c., in various pantomimes in neighbouring theatres.

I had been invited there to amuse the kiddies with songs and imitations, and now they were all shrieking and yelling at the top of their voices for a ghost story. "It's getting near Christmas," they all shouted, "and we all want to hear about ghosts, real creepy ghosts." I pointed out the fact that most ghost stories were bunkum, and that such tales were very apt to keep wee laddies and lassies awake at night; but, bless you, they wouldn't listen to that one bit. They wanted ghosts, and ghosts they would have.

Well, in about an hour I had yarned off most of my best bogey stories. I had used up most of my tales regarding Scottish, English, and Continental Castles, and the banshees, water kelpies, wraiths, &c., connected therewith; but still those children, like Oliver Twist, demanded more. I really was fairly stumped, when, all of a sudden, my mind flew back to 1875, when a strange story was told me by Captain Chester in the Coursal grounds at beautiful Baden-Baden. I first fell in with this dear old warrior in Rome, and we became firm friends, and travelled together for many cheery weeks. He told me his queer tale in the very strongest of military language, which I must omit. The language would be suitable to use in bunkers, but not on paper. It was a sultry day. So were his remarks.

It would seem that many years before, he had visited Scot-

land and England to try and see a ghost or two. He had been to Cumnor Hurst in order to investigate the appearances of ill-fated Amy Robsart. He went to Rainham Hall to interview the famous Brown Lady, and he journeyed to Hampton Court to hear the Shrieking Ghost, and also went to Church Strelton to see if he could fix the ghost at the Copper Hole. In Scotland he followed the scent of various ghosts, and finally landed in St Andrews.

"By Jove, sir," he said, "that's the place for ghosts. Every blessed corner is full of them—bang full. Look at those fellows in the Castle dungeons, and Beaton and Sharpe and the men that got hanged and burned, and the old dev—— I mean witches. *I saw my ghost there.* Years and years ago I took an old house in St Andrews, which was a small place then. Very little golf was played, and there was very little to do. But, gad, sir, the ghosts were thick, and the quaint old bodies in the town were full of them. They could spin yarns for hours about phantom coaches, death knells, corpse candles, people going about in winding sheets, phantom hearses, and Lord knows what else. I loved it, it took me quite back to the middle ages."

So I told these children Captain Chester's tale, as nearly as possible in his own words, minus the forcible epithets. I managed to hit off his voice and manner, and this in particular seemed to amuse the bairns. "Egad, sir," he said, "it was a curious time. Of all the tales I heard, the one that pleased and fascinated me most was the legend of the monk that looks over St Regulus's Tower on moonlight nights. I went thither every night, and constantly fancied I saw a figure peering over the edge, but was not certain. Then I got hold of a very old man, who related to me the old legend. It seems that years ago there was a good Prior of St Andrews named Robert de Montrose. He ruled well, gently, and wisely, but among the monks there was one who was always in hot water, and whom Prior Robert had often to haul over the coals. He played practical jokes, often absented himself from the daily and nightly offices of Holy Kirk, and otherwise upset the rules and discipline. Finally, when Earl Douglas and his retinue came to St Andrews to present to the Cathedral a costly statue, long known as the

Douglas Lady, this monk made desperate love to one of the waiting women of Lady Douglas. For this he was imprisoned in the Priory Dungeon for some days. It was the custom of Robert de Montrose almost every fine night to ascend the tower of St Rule and admire the view. The summit was reached in those days by means of ladders and wooden landings—not, as it is now, by a stair. In those days, too, the apse and part of the nave were still standing, and the summit of the solemn old tower was crowned by a small spire. One evening just before Yuletide, when the Prior, as usual, was on the top of the tower, the contumacious monk slyly followed him up the ladders, stabbed him in the back with a small dagger, and flung him over the north side of the old tower."

"I thought, Captain Chester," I said, "that the murder took place on the Dormitory stairs."

"Gad, Zooks, and Oddbodkins, sir, I am telling you what I was told, and what I can prove, sir."

"All right," I replied, "please fire away."

"Well," continued Chester, "they told me the Prior had often been seen since peeping over the tower, and at times he was seen to fall, as he did years ago, from the summit. By the bye, his assassin was starved to death and buried in some old midden. One moonlight night as my brother and I were standing on the Kirkhill, to our horror and amazement we saw a figure appear suddenly on the top of the tower, leap on to the parapet, and deliberately jump over. Zounds, sir, my blood ran cold."

"We did not hesitate long, but jumped the low wall of the Cathedral. It was easily done in those days, and we were young and active, and hurried to the grim old tower. Just as we neared it, a monk passed us in the Augustinian habit, his cowl was thrown back, and for just one second we had a view of his pallid, handsome face and keen penetrating eyes. Then he disappeared as suddenly as he had appeared. We were alone in the moonlight, nothing stirring."

"That is very odd," I said.

"Zooks! sir, I have odder things still to tell you. We went home to the old house, had supper, and retired to bed

thoughtfully. I woke about 2 a.m. The blinds were up and it was as clear as day with the moonlight. Imagine my blank astonishment when I clearly perceived, leaning up against the mantelpiece, the pallid monk I had seen a few hours before near the Square Tower. He leaned on his elbow and was gazing intently at me, while in his hand he held some object that had a blue glitter in the moonbeams.

"He smiled. 'Fear not, brother,' he said, 'I am Prior Robert of Montrose who quitted this earth many years syne, and of whom you have been talking and thinking so much of late days. I saw you to-night in our cruelly ruined Abbey Kirk. Alas! alas! but I come from ayont the distant hills and have far to go to-night.'

"'What do you want, Holy Father?' I said, 'and what of your murder?'

"'That is forgiven and forgotten long syne,' he said, 'and I love to revisit, *at times*, my old haunts, and so does he. You have in your regiment, methinks, one named Montrose, a scion of our family.'

"'Yes,' I said, 'I know Bob Montrose well.'

"'See you this dagger I hold,' said Prior Robert, 'it was with this I lost my life on this earth many years syne on the tower of blessed St Rule. They buried it with me in my stone kist; I will leave it here with you to give to my kinsman, for it will prove of use to him e'er he pass hence—mark my words.'

"He raised his hand as in act of blessing, and melted away. I fell back in a sleep or in a faint. When I woke the morning sun was streaming into my bedroom. At first I thought I had eaten too much supper and had a nightmare, but there on the table by my bed lay an old dagger of curious workmanship—the dagger that slew the Prior years and years ago. I faithfully fulfilled my vow, and my friend, Major Bob Montrose, has now got his monkish ancestor's dagger."

"That's all Captain Chester told me, dear children. Goodbye, don't forget me, and do not forget old St Andrews Ghosts, the Tower of St Rule, and the Spectre of Prior Robert of Montrose."

Then a modern hansom whirled me away to King's Cross.

Related by Captain Chester.

In my travels I have met many very extraordinary and remarkable people with hobbies and fads of various kinds, but I never met a man of such curious personality as this old friend of mine, Captain Chester. All his methods and ideas were purely original. Everyone has some hobby; his hobby was ghost and spook-hunting.

We were sitting one lovely September evening in the gardens of one of the hotels at Bonn, which stretched down to the river Rhine, listening to the band and watching the great rafts coming down the river from the Black Forest.

"By Jove, sir," said the old man, "I have shot big game in the Rockies, and hunted tigers and all that sort of thing; but, zooks! sir, I prefer hunting ghosts any day. That Robert de Montrose was the first I saw. There are shoals of these shades about, a perfect army of them everywhere, especially in St Andrews. Gad, sir, you should hear the banshees shrieking at night in the Irish bogs. I don't believe in your infernal sea serpents, but I've seen water kelpies in the Scottish and American lakes."

I told him I had never heard a banshee or seen a water kelpie.

"Very likely, sir, very probable. Everyone can't see and hear these things. *I can*,"

I told him I had never seen a disembodied spirit, and didn't want to.

"Gad, zooks! sir, I consider disinspirited bodies far worse. They are quite common. I allude to human bodies that have lost their spirits or souls, and yet go about among us. Zounds! sir, my cousin is one of them."

"Ah," he continued, "detached personality is a curious

thing. I can detach my personality, can you ? "

"Most certainly not," I said, "what the deuce do you mean ? "

"Mean," he said, "I mean my spirit can float out of my body at will. My spirit becomes a sort of mental baloon. I can then defy destiny."

"How in thunder do you manage to do it anyway ? "

"By practice, sir, of course. When my spirit floats out of my body, I can see my own old body sitting in my arm-chair and an ugly old wreck of a body it is. It is bad for one, I admit ; it is very weakening. Another thing may happen ; another wandering spirit may suddenly take possession of one's body, and then one's own spirit can't get back again, and it becomes a wandering spirit, and is always trying to force itself into other people's bodies. Then one's spirit gets into a mental bunker, you see."

"I don't see a bit. It is most unpleasant. Tell me about ghosts you have seen, and about that dagger you gave Major Montrose."

"Oh ! so then you are not interested in eliminated personality ? "

"Not a bit," I said, "I don't know what it is. Tell me about that dagger for a change."

"Oh ! ah ! Well, the dagger Robert of Montrose gave me proved of great use to my old friend, Bob Montrose, on *many* occasions. It had a wonderful power of its own. Once he got into a broil with a lot of Spanish fellows one night, and as he was unarmed at the time he was in a remarkably tight corner. Suddenly something slipped into his hand, and, by Jove, sir, it was the dagger, and that dagger saved his life. Another time he found himself in an American train with a raving lunatic, and if it had not been for the protecting dagger he'd have been torn limb from limb. After that he took it everywhere with him."

"Where is it now ? "

"Well, there's an odd thing if you like. Bob died in the Isle of France, where Paul and Virginia used to be. He was killed by a fall, and is buried there. He left the dagger to me in

kis will, but no human eyes have ever seen that dagger since his death. It may have been stolen, or it may have gone back to where it came from into Robert of Montrose's stone kist in the old Chapter-House at St Andrews Cathedral. Probably its usefulness was at an end. and it was needed no more. Bob told me one queer thing about that dagger. *Once a year* near Christmastide (the dagger hung on the wall of his bedroom) it used to exude a thick reddish fluid like blood, which used to cover the blade in large drops, and it remained so for several hours—and, again, sometimes at night it used to shine with a bright light of its own."

"That is indeed wonderful," I said, lighting another cheroot, "but tell me more about the St Andrews bogles. Astral bodies, dual personality, and things of that kind depress me a bit."

"Well, that is odd," said old Chester, "I love them. When I was in St Andrews I rented a fine old house, with huge thick walls, big fireplaces, funny corkscrew stairs, such rum holes and corners, and big vaulted kitchens. It's all pulled down now, I believe, and a bran new house built; but I hear the vaulted rooms below are left exactly as they were. People didn't take to the old house; they heard noises and rappings, and saw things in the night, and so on. *We all saw things.* My brother met the ghost of a horrible looking old witch, quite in the orthodox dress, on the Witch Hill above the Witch Lake. It upset him terribly at the time—made him quite ill—nerves went all to pot—would not sleep in a room by himself after that. He made me devilish angry, sir, I can tell you."

"Perhaps it was Mother Alison Craik, a well-known witch, who was burnt there."

"Likely enough, sir, it may have been the old cat you mention, an old hag. Then my nephew and I saw that phantom coach in the Abbey Walk one windy moonlight night. It passed us very quickly, but made a deuced row, like a lifeboat carriage."

"What was it like?"

"Like a huge black box with windows in it, and a queer light inside. It reminded me of a great coffin. Ugly looking affair; very uncanny thing to meet at that time of night and in such a lonely spot. It was soon gone, but we heard its rumbling

noise for a long time."

"What were the horses like, eh?"

"Shadowy looking black things, like great black beetles with long thin legs."

"And what was the driver like?" I asked.

"He was a tall thin, black object also, like a big, black, lank lobster, with a cocked hat on the top. That's all I could see. On the top of the coach was an object that looked like a gigantic tarantula spider, with a head like a moving gargoyle. I can't get at the real history of that mysterious old coach yet. I don't believe it has anything whatever to do with the murdered prelates, Beaton or Sharpe. However, the coach does go about. Another wraith I saw at the Castle of St Andrews was that of James Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell, third husband of Mary Queen of Scots. He lies buried in the crypt of Faarveile Church, close to the cattegut. Before his death he was a prisoner at Malmo; then he was sent to Denmark, and died in the dungeon of the State prison at Drachsholm."

"I am awfully interested," I said, "about those times, and in Bothwell and Mary in particular."

"Odd's fish, sir," said Chester, "so am I. I went to Faarveile to see Bothwell's well-preserved body. The verger took me down a trap-door near the altar, and there it lies in a lidless box, a very fine face, with a cynical and mocking mouth. He murdered Darnley, and he was treated and buried as a murderer in those bygone days. At Malmo folks say he was tormented by the ghosts of his mad wife, Jane Huntly, and by Darnley. He ended his days in misery, and serve him devilish well right, say I. I love and revere lovely Mary Stuart. Damn it, sir, he deserted her when she was in a fix at Carberry Hill, the curmudgeon."

"But what of the appearances of the Earl you saw?"

"Met him twice at the Castle—no mistaking him—a big, knightly, handsome fellow. Spirits can easily at times assume their earthly form and dress. I recognised him at once—the sneering lips and all, just like his pictures, too. When he glided past me his teeth were chattering like a dice-box, and the wind was whistling through his neck bones. I addressed him boldly

by name, but he melted away. One sees these apparitions with one's mental eyes. I saw him again leaning against the door that leads to that oubliette in the Sea Tower of the Castle. Egad, sir, he *exactly* resembled the body I saw in the old crypt at Faarviele. He often appears there, and at Hermitage Castle also. No mistake, sir, that was Hepburn, the Earl of Bothwell. I must tell you *some other time*—(it's getting very late now)—of the ghosts I saw in my house at St Andrews, and of the Prior or Monk of Pittenweem. I must turn into bed now. I go to the service at the Cathedral here early to-morrow."

Then the tall figure of Captain Chester strode away and left me alone to my meditations.

Well! I suppose if *I had been* Captain Chester, left alone there in those gardens, I'd have seen a ghost or two with my mental eyes; but, instead. I saw a fat waiter approaching, who told me my supper awaited me.

The Screaming Skull of Greyfriars.

I NEVER met a better fellow in the world than my old friend, Allan Beauchamp. He had been educated at Eton, and Magdalen at Oxford, after which he joined a crack regiment, and later on took it into his head to turn doctor. He was a great traveller and a magnificent athlete. There was no game in which he did not excel. Curiously enough, he hated music; he had no ear for it, and he did not know the difference between the airs of "Tommy, make room for your uncle" and "The Lost Chord." He was tremendously proud of his pedigree; he had descended from the de Beauchamps, and one of his ancestors, he gravely informed people, had helped Noah to get the wasps and elephants into the Ark. Another of them seems to have been not very far away in the Garden of Eden. In fact, they seem to have been quite prehistoric. He was quite cracked on the subject of brain transference, telepathy, spiritualism, ghosts, warnings, and the like, and on these points he was most uncanny and fearsome. The literature he had about them was blood curdling. He believed in dual personality, and in visions, horoscopes, and dreams. He showed me a pamphlet he had written, entitled "The Toad-faced Demon of Lone Devil's Dyke." He was always flitting about Britain exploring haunted houses and castles, and sleeping in haunted rooms when it was possible. Some years ago Beauchamp and myself, accompanied by his faithful valet, rejoicing in the name of Pellingham Truffles, went to the Highlands for a bit of quiet and rest, and it was there I heard his curious story of the skull.

We were sitting over a cosy fire after dinner. It was snowing hard outside, and very cold. Our pipes were alight

and our grog on the table, when Allan Beauchamp suddenly remarked—"It's a deuced curious thing for a man to be always followed about the place by a confounded grinning skull."

"Eh, what," I said, "who the deuce is being followed about by a skull? It's rubbish, and quite impossible."

"Not a bit," said my friend, "I've had a skull after me more or less for several years."

"It sounds like a remark a lunatic would make," I rejoined rather crossly. "Do not talk bunkum. You'll go dotty if you believe such infernal rot."

"It is not bunkum or rot a bit," said Allan, "Its gospel truth. Ask Truffles, ask Jack Weston, or Jimmy Darkgood, or any of my south country pals."

"I don't know Jack Weston or Jimmy Darkgood," I said, "but tell me the whole story, and some day, *if it's good*, I'll put it in the *St Andrews Citizen*."

"It's mostly about St Andrews," said Beauchamp, "so here goes, but shove on some coals first."

I did so, and then requested him to fire away.

"It was long, long ago, I think about the year 1513, that one of my ancestors, a man called Neville de Beauchamp, resided in Scotland. It seems he was an uncommonly wild dog, went in for racing and cards, and could take his wine and ale with any of them even in those hard-drinking days. He was known as Flash Neville. Later on he married a pretty girl, the daughter of a silk mercer in Perth, who, it seems, died (they said of a broken heart) two years after. Neville de Beauchamp was seized with awful remorse, and became shortly after a monk in Greyfriars Monastery at St Andrews. After Neville's wife's death, her relations seem to have been on the hunt after him, burning for revenge, and the girl's brother, a rough, wild dog in those stormy days, at last managed to track his quarry down in the monastery at St Andrews."

"Very interesting," I said, "that monastery stood very nearly on the site of the present infant school, and we found the well in 1880. Well, what did this brother do, eh?"

"It seems that one afternoon after vespers he forced his way into the Monastery Chapel, sought out Neville de Beau-

champ, and slashed off his head with a sword in the aisle of the Kirk. Now a queer thing happened—his body fell on the floor, but the severed head, with a wild scream, flew up to the chapel ceiling and vanished through its roof."

"Mighty queer that," I said.

"The body was reverently buried," went on Allan, "but the head never was recovered, and, whirling through the air over the monastery, screaming and groaning most pitifully, it used to cause great terror to the monks and others o' nights. It was a well-known story, and few cared to venture in that locality after nightfall. The head soon became a skull, and since that time has always haunted some member of the house of Beauchamp. Now comes a strange thing. I went a few years ago and lived in rooms at St Andrews for a change, and while there I heard of my uncle's death somewhere abroad. I had never seen him, but I had frequently heard that he was very much perplexed and worried by the tender attentions paid him by the skull of Neville de Beauchamp, which was always turning up at odd times and in unexpected places."

"This is a grand tale," I said.

"Now I come on the job," said Allan, ruefully. "That uncle was the very last of our family, and I wondered if that skull would come my way. I felt very ill and nervous after I got the news of my uncle's death. A strange sense of depression and oppression overcame me, and I got very restless. One stormy evening I felt impelled by some strange influence to go out. I wandered about the place for several hours and got drenched. I felt as if I was walking in my sleep, or as if I had taken some drug or other. Then I had a sort of vision—I had just rounded the corner of North Bell Street."

"Now called Greyfriars Garden," I remarked.

"Yes! Well, when I got around that corner I saw a large, strange building before me. I opened a wicket gate and entered what I found to be the chapel; service was over, the lights were being extinguished, and the air was laden with incense. As I knelt in a corner of the chapel I saw the whole scene, the tragedy of which I had heard, enacted all over again. I saw that monk in the aisle, I saw a man rush in and cut off his head.

I saw the body fall and the head fly up with a shriek to the roof. When I came to myself I found I was sitting on the low wall of the school. I was very cold and wet, and I got up to go home. As I rose I saw lying on the pavement at my feet what appeared to be a small football. I gave it a vicious kick, when to my horror it turned over and I saw it was a skull. It was gnashing its teeth and moaning. Then with a shriek it flew up in the air and vanished. A horrible thing. Then I knew the worst. The skull of the monk Neville de Beauchamp had attached itself to me for life, I being the last of the race. Since then it is almost always with me."

"Where is it now?" I said, shuddering.

"Not very far away, you bet," he said.

"It's a most unpleasant tale," I said. "Good night, I'm off to bed after that."

I was in my first sleep about an hour afterwards, when a knock came at my door, and the valet came in.

"Sorry to disturb you, sir," he said, "but the skull has *just come back*. It's in the next room. Would you like to see it?"

"Certainly not," I roared. "Get away and let me go to sleep."

Then and there I firmly resolved to leave next morning. I hated skulls, and I fancied that probably it might take a fancy to me, and I had no desire to be followed about the country by a skull as if it was a fox terrier.

Next morning I went in to breakfast. "Where is that beastly skull?" I said to Allan.

"Oh, it's off again somewhere. Heaven knows where; but I have had another vision, a waking vision."

"What was it?"

"Well," said Allan, "I saw the skull and a white hand which seemed to beckon to me beside it. Then they slowly receded and in their place was what looked like a big sheet of paper. On it in large letters were the words —*Your friend, Jack Weston, is dead.* This morning I got this wire telling me of his sudden death. Read it."

That afternoon I left the Highlands and Allan Beauchamp.

Since then I have constant letters from him from his home in England. He has tried every means possible to get rid of that monk's skull; but they are of no avail, it always returns. So he has made the best he can of it, and keeps it in a locked casket in an empty room at the end of a wing of the old house. He says it keeps fairly quiet, but on stormy nights wails and gruesome shrieks are heard from the casket in that closed apartment.

I heard from him last week. He said :—

"Dear W. T. L.,—I don't think I mentioned that twice a year the skull of Neville de Beauchamp vanishes from its casket for a period of about two days. It is never away longer.

"I wonder if it still haunts its old monastery at St Andrews where its owner was slain. Do write and tell me if anyone now in that vicinity hears or sees the screaming skull of my ancestor, Neville de Beauchamp."

The Spectre of the Castle.

SEVERAL years had elapsed since I met the butler of Lausdree Castle in the Highland Inn. I had just come up from the south of England for some golf and fresh air, and was looking over my letters one morning at breakfast when I opened the following missive :—

Lausdree Castle,

.....

SIR,—Yours to command. Sir, I have not forgot our pleasant talk on that snowy night up in the far north, when you were pleased to be interested in my experiences of Lausdree. Could you very kindly meet me any day and time you choose to fix at Leuchars ? And oblige,

Your obedient servant,

JEREMIAH ANKLEBONE.

P.S.—I have something to divulge to you connected with St Andrews that may absorb your mind.

Accordingly, I fixed up arrangements and met Mr Anklebone at Leuchars, where we went to the nearest hostelry and ordered the best lunch they had there. Jeremiah looked thinner, older, and whiter than when I last saw him, doubtless owing to his frequent communing with spirits.

" How is Lausdree getting on ? " I meekly inquired, " and what of the ghosts ? "

" It is getting on fine, sir. I have had a number of new experiences since I had the pleasure of seeing you last. You must understand, sir, that my family for generations have been favoured with occult powers. My father was a great seer, and my great-grandfather, Mr Concrikketty Anklebone, of the Isle

of Skye, was a wonderful visionary."

Now, Anklebone was an interesting old fellow, but he had a tiresome habit of wandering away from his theme, and, as it were, getting off the main road into a labyrinth of bye-ways, and one had, metaphorically, to push him out of these side lanes and place him on his feet again in the main road.

"Before I come to St Andrews Castle," he said, "I must tell you about a queer episode of an astral body at Lausdree, a disentangled personality, as it were."

"Push along," I said, "and tell me."

"Well, one afternoon after luncheon the master and I were in the dining hall, when we saw a gentleman crossing the lawn towards the castle. He was a tall man in a riding dress, with curly hair and a large flowing moustache. He came up to the window and looked in earnestly at us, and then walked along the gravel-walk round to the castle door. 'Hullo!' said the master, 'that is my old friend, Jack Herbert, to whom I have let Lausdree for this summer. What on earth can bring him here? I'll go to the door myself and let him in. He never said he was coming.'

"In a minute or two the master came back looking bewildered. 'Anklebone,' he said, 'that's a *very* queer thing; there is nobody there!' 'Perhaps,' I suggested, 'the gentleman has gone round to the stables'; so we both hurried off to look, but not a sign of anyone could be seen, and we stared blankly at each other. We could not make it out. Two days after, the master got a letter from Mr Jack Herbert telling him he had had a bad fall off his horse, had injured his spine, and was confined to bed.

"Mr Herbert went on to say that two days before, while he was asleep, he dreamt vividly that he was at Lausdree; that he crossed the lawn to the window of the dining hall, and, looking in, saw my master and the butler (that's me) in the room. He was going round to the front door when he awoke. Now that was his *astral body* that Master and I saw. He loved Lausdree, and during sleep he came and paid us that visit. Queer, isn't it? Ten days after, he died. He wanted to see the old castle before he died, and his force of will power brought his

double self, or astral body, to visit us. *It is not so uncommon* as people think.

"Numbers of people are seen in two places at once far apart. Look at Archbishop Sharpe of St Andrews. He was in Edinburgh, at Holyrood I think, and sent his servant over post haste to St Andrews to bring back some papers he had forgotten there. When his trusty servant went up to his study in the Novum Hospitium to get the papers from the desk, lo! there was the Archbishop sitting in his usual chair and scowling at him. He told the Archbishop this when he returned with the papers to Edinburgh, but his Grace sternly bade him be silent and mention the matter to no one on pain of death.

"Now, sir, it seems that my master is able to see astral bodies, for he saw Mr Jack Herbert, but I doubt if he could see a *real spirit.* Perhaps, sir," suggested Anklebone, politely, "you might be able to see astral bodies?"

"Thank you very much indeed," I replied, "but I'm——— if I want to see anything of the sort; but I have heard a tale of an eminent man in London who took a nap in his armchair every afternoon, and while asleep appeared to his friends in different parts of the country, but I doubt the fact very much."

"Ah!" said the butler, very solemnly, "only about one in a thousand has the power of visualising real spirits. Many ordinary persons have *long* sight, and some have *short* sight, but most people are short-sighted when ghosts are visible. The ghosts are really there all the time. Some people cannot see them, but can feel their presence or touch only. Most animals can see spirits; sometimes they are killed with terror when they see the spirits."

I pulled the bell rope and ordered some spirits for the butler. "I don't think that will kill you with terror," I said when it arrived.

He looked grateful, and remarked that talking was dry work, however interesting the subject might be.

"Now, look here, Mr Anklebone," I said, "you know, I daresay, the stories about the Cathedral, the Haunted Tower, and all that. Please tell me what your experiences have been there."

Anklebone's whole appearance suddenly changed; he gripped my arm violently, shivered and shuddered, and turned ghastly pale. I thought he was going to have a fit.

"For pity's sake, sir," he said, trembling, "ask me nothing about that. There is something *too terrible* there, but I dare not reveal what I know and have seen to anyone. Do not allude to it again or it will drive me mad."

He lay back in his chair for a few moments with his eyes closed and shaking all over, but he gradually recovered his usual appearance.

"I wish to tell you about the Castle Spectre," he said, weakly.

I must confess that I felt nonplussed and disappointed at the turn the conversation had taken, as whatever my private opinion was regarding the worthy Jeremiah's curious statements, still I felt anxious to find out his experiences at the Cathedral particularly. However, I swallowed my disappointment like a Trojan, and begged him to proceed.

He gulped down his spirits and informed me he felt better again, but he did not seem quite himself for some time.

"Well, sir," he said, "I often used to climb over the Castle wall after dusk, and smoke my pipe and meditate on all the grand folk that must have been there in bygone days before the smash-up. I thought of lovely young Queen Mary, of Mary Hamilton, and her other Maries, of Lord Darnley, of the poet Castelar, of Lord Arran, and the Duke of Rothesay, and all the Stuart Kings that used to be there. Then I thought of Prior Hepburn and poor murdered Cardinal Beaton, and of monks, knights, and lovely wenches that used to frequent the old place. I loved it, for I have read history a lot. One could not help thinking of the feasting, revelry, and pageants of those interesting old times, and the grand services in the churches, and what fine dresses everybody wore."

I saw he was going bang off the subject again, and when he began to tell me there were lots of Anklebones in Norman times about Fifeshire, I had to pull him back with a jerk to his ghost at the Castle.

"Very well, sir, I was in the Castle one evening, and I was sit-

ting on the parapet of the old wall when I saw a head appearing up the old broken steps on the east side of the Castle that once led down to the great dining hall. I knew no one could *now* come up that way without a ladder from the sea beach, and when the figure got to the level ground it came right through the iron railing just as if no obstruction were there. I stared hard and watched the advancing figure. It looked like a woman. I had heard of the Cardinal's ghost, and wondered if it could be his Eminence himself. Nearer and nearer it came, and although it was a gusty evening, I noticed the flowing garments of the approaching figure were quite still and unruffled by the wind. It was like a moving statue. As it passed me slowly a few yards away, I saw they were not the robes of a Cardinal, but those of an Archbishop. I am a Churchman, and know the garments quite well. I saw all his vestments clearly, and I shall never forget the pale, ashen set face, and the thin determined mouth. Then I noticed one *very very* strange thing—the statuesque tall figure had a thick rope round the neck, and the end of the rope was trailing along the grass behind it, but there was no sound whatever. On it went and began to climb the stairs to the upper apartments. I tried to follow, but could not move for a bit. I felt as if I was mesmerised or paralysed. I was all in a cold sweat, too, and I was glad to get away from the Castle at last and hurry home. I haven't gone so fast for many years. When I went next day to Lausdree I made a clean breast of the whole affair to Master.

"'Would you know him again?' he asked me.

"'Aye,' I replied, 'I would know that face and figure among a thousand.'

"'Come to the study,' said the master, 'and I will show you some pictures.'

"We went, and I looked over a number of them. At last I came to one that fairly transfixed me. There was no mistaking the face. Before me was the picture of the spectre I had seen the previous night in the ruined Castle of Saint Andrews.

"'Well, Anklebone,' said the master, 'this is *really wonderful*, and you actually saw the rope round the neck?'

"'I did,' I said, 'as I am a living man, but who is it? It is not the Cardinal?'

"'No,' said the master very gravely, '*this man* was publicly hanged by his enemies on a gibbet at the Market Cross of Stirling on April 1st, 1571.'

"'But who was he?' I asked, imploringly.

"'The man, or ghost, you saw,' said master, 'was Archbishop John Hamilton of St Andrews—in his own Castle grounds where he once reigned supreme.'"

I said farewell to Mr Anklebone, and as I thought over his extraordinary story journeying home in the train, I could not help repeating over and over again to myself that very curious name that seemed to rhyme with the motion of the train—Concrikketty Anklebone.

The Smothered Piper of the West Cliffs.

"*Hush! hush! hush! Here comes the Bogie Man.*"

This was shouted out to me very loudly by a cheery golfing "Johnny," as I entered the merry smoking-room of the old 'Varsity Golf Club at Coldham Common, Cambridge, some years ago. "Draw in your arm-chair, light a cigar or a pipe, and tell us all [many celebrated actors were present] some of those wonderful bogie stories about dear St Andrews. It is the bogie time of the year, and you must remember I played the 'Bogie Man' for you in one of your big burlesques at St Andrews and Cupar some years ago, so fire away with the bogies, please, and be quick."

Then I reeled off a big lot of yarns: of the ghost, Thomas Plater, who murdered Prior Robert of Montrose on the dormitory staircase before vespers; of the nigger in a Fifeshire house, who is invisible himself, but maps out his bare footmarks on the floor of the painted gallery; of Sharpe's coach, which, being heard, betokens a death; of haunted old Balcomie ruined castle; of the murdered pedlar in our own South Street, who sweeps down with a chilly hand the cheeks of invaders to his haunted cellar; of the ghost that appeared in the house of Archbishop Ross, mentioned in Lyon's History; and of the terrible ghost in the Novum Hospitium, which so alarmed people that its dwelling had to be pulled down, and only a fragment of the building now remains. But they wanted to hear the tale of the "Ghostly Piper of the West Cliffs"; so I told them the legend as I had heard it years ago.

It seems that in the old days no houses existed on the Cliffs

from the old Castle of Hamilton to the modern monument near the Witch Hill. It was all meadow land, much used for the grazing of cattle and sheep, and also much frequented as a playground for byegone children. On and over the face of the cliffs, slightly to the westward of Butts Wynd, existed then the entrance to a fearsome cave, or old ecclesiastical passage, which was a terror to many, and most people shunned it. It had many names, among them the "Jingling Cove," "The Jingling Man's Hole," "John's Coal Hole," and later "The Piper's Cave, or Grave." A few of the oldest inhabitants still remember it. A few knew a portion of it; none dared venture beyond this well-known portion. Like the interior of an old ice-house, it was dark, chilly, and clammy; its walls ran with cold sweat. It was partly natural, but mostly artificial—a most dark, creepy, and fearsome place.

In a description which I got of it many years ago, and which appeared in the *St Andrews Citizen*, I learn that "the opening of this cliff passage was small and triangular; it was situated on a projecting ledge of rock, and it was high enough, after entering, to enable a full-sized man to stand upright. From the opening it was a steep incline down for a distance of 49 feet, thereafter it proceeded in a level direction for over 70 feet, when it descended into a chamber. At the further end of this chamber were two, if not more, passages branching off from it. Between the passages was cut out in the rock a Latin cross." This would seem to point to an ecclesiastical connection, and had nothing whatever to do with the more modern smugglers' cave near the ladies' bathing place.

But enough of description. In byegone days, in a small cottage, little better than a hovel, situated in Argyle, lived an old dame named Goodman. She occupied one room, and her son and his young wife tenanted the other little chamber. He was a merry, dare-devil, happy-go-lucky lad, and he was famed as one of the best players on the bagpipes in all Fife; he would have pleased even Maggie Lauder. Of nights at all hours he would make the old grass-grown streets lively with his music. "Jock the Piper," was a favourite among both young and old. He was much interested in the tale of the old West Cliff cave, and took a

bet on with some cronies that on a New Year's night he would investigate the mysteries of the place, and play his pipes up it as far as he could go. His old mother, his wife, and many of his friends tried hard to dissuade him from doing so foolish and so foolhardy a thing; but he remained obdurate, and firmly stuck to his bet. On a dark New Year's night he started up the mysterious cavern with his pipes playing merrily; and they were heard, it is said, passing beneath Market Street, then they died away. They suddenly ceased, and were never more heard. He and his well-known pipes were never seen again.

Somewhere beneath St Andrews lies the whitened bones of that by-gone piper lad, with his famous pipes beside him. Attempts were made to find him, but without avail; no one, not even the bravest, dared to venture into that passage full of damp foul air. His mother and wife were distracted, and the young wife used to sit for hours at the mouth of that death-trap cave. Finally, her mind gave way, and she used to wander at all hours down to the mouth of the cave where her husband had vanished. The following New Year's night she left the little cottage in Argyle, and putting a shawl over her wasted shoulders, turned to the old woman and said, "I'm going to my Jock." Morning came, but she never returned home. She had, indeed, gone to her lost "Jock." For years after, the small crouching figure of a woman could be seen on moon-light nights perched on the rock balcony of the fatal cave, dim, shadowy, and transparent. Wild shrieks and sounds of weird pipe music were constantly heard coming from out of that entrance.

In after years, when the houses were built, the mouth of this place was either built or covered up, and its memory only remains to us.

But what of "Piper Jock?" He, it is said, still walks the edge of the old cliffs; and his presence is heralded by an icy breath of cold air, and ill be it for anyone who meets or sees his phantom form or hears his pipe music. He seems to have the same effect as the ghost of "Nell Cook" in the dark entry at Canterbury, mentioned in the "Ingoldsby Legends," from which I must quote a few verses—

" And tho' two hundred years have flown,
Nell Cook doth still pursue
Her weary walk, and they who cross her path
The deed may rue.

Her fatal breath is fell as death !
The simoon's blast is not
More dire (a wind in Africa
That blows uncommon hot).

But all unlike the simoon's blast,
Her breath is deadly cold,
Delivering quivering, shivering shocks
Upon both young and old.

And whoso in the entry dark
Doth feel that fatal breath,
He ever dies within the year
Some dire untimely death."

So it is with him who meets " Piper Jock."

" By Jove," interrupted the golfing " Johnny," " has anyone seen him lately ? "

" I only know of one man," I said, " who told me that one awful night in a heavy thunderstorm he had heard wild pipe music, and seen the figure of a curiously dressed piper walking along the cliff edge, *where no mortal could walk*, at a furious speed."

" What do you think of it all ? " asked my golfing friend.

" I don't know, I'm sure ; I am not receptive and don't see ghosts, but if I could only find *now* the mouth of that place, I bet another ' Jock ' and I would get along it and find out the whereabouts of ' Jock the Piper ' and his poor little wife. Here is my hansom. Good night, don't forget the Piper."

And they haven't.

The Beautiful White Lady of the Haunted Tower.

"How very, very lovely she was to be sure!"

"Of whom are you speaking?" I asked. "Of some of the Orchid or Veronique people, or of some of your own company? I did not know you were hard hit old chap." I was sitting in the smoking-room of the Great Northern Hotel, King's Cross, talking to an old friend, an Oxford man, but now the manager of a big theatrical company, when he suddenly made the above remark.

"No, no! Of none of those people," he replied; "but our talking of St Andrews reminded me of a ghost, a phantom, or a spectre—call it what you choose—I saw in that ancient city several years ago—no horrid bogie, but a very lovely girl, indeed."

"By Jove," I said, "tell me about it; I want a new ghost tale very badly indeed. I know a lot of them, but perhaps this is something new and spicy."

"I am sure I do not know if it be new," he replied. "I have never seen anything spectral before or since, but I saw that lovely woman three different times. It must be fully ten years ago. I saw her twice on the Scores and once in an old house."

"Well, I must really hear all about it," I said. "Please fire away."

"All right, all right!" he said. "Now for her *first* appearance. I was living in St Andrews at the time. It must have been the end of January or beginning of February, and I was strolling along to the Kirkhill after dinner and enjoying the fine evening and the keen sea breeze, and thinking about the old, old days of the Castle and Cathedral, of Beaton's ghost,

and many other queer tales, when a female figure glided past me. She was in a long, flowing white dress, and had her beautiful dark hair hanging down past her waist. I was very much astonished to see a girl dressed in such a manner wandering about alone at such an hour, and I followed her along for several yards, when lo! just after she had passed the turret light she completely vanished near the square tower, which I was afterwards informed was known as the 'Haunted Tower.' I hunted all round the place carefully, but saw nothing more that night. Queer, wasn't it?"

"Certainly it was," I remarked; "but I know dozens of weird stories connected with that old tower. But what more have you to tell me?"

"Well," he continued, "as you may imagine, the whole affair worried and puzzled me considerably, but it was gradually vanishing from my mind when near the same place I saw her again. I had my sister with me this time, and we both can swear to it. It was a lovely night with a faint moon, and as the white lady swept past quite silently we saw the soft trailing dress and the long, black wavy hair. There was something like a rosary hanging from her waist, and a cross or a locket hanging round her throat. As she passed she turned her head towards us, and we both noticed her beautiful features, especially her brilliant eyes. She vanished, as before, near that old tower. My sister was so awfully frightened that I had to hurry her off home. We were both absolutely convinced we had seen a being not of this world—a face never to be forgotten."

"How strange," I said. "You know, several people saw a girl in that built-up old turret lying in her coffin. A former priest of the Episcopal Church here saw some masons repairing the wall of that tower, and their chisel fell into the turret through a chink. On removing a stone, they came upon a chamber within, and they saw a girl dressed in white, with long hair, lying in a coffin, wanting the lid. The hole was built up again at once. I know, and have often talked to persons who saw her there. One of them was a mason employed at the work. The doorway of the tower is opened up now, and a grill put in, but there is no sign of the girl. Queer stories arose. Some said it was the

remains of Princess Muren, daughter of Constantine. Others said it was the embalmed body of some sweet girl Saint concealed there in times of trouble, and so on; but finish your story."

"I have little more to tell," he answered. "Some months afterwards I was a guest in an old house in Fifeshire, and was given the turret room. On the second night I went to bed early, as I had been at golf all day and felt awfully dead beat. I must have fallen asleep suddenly, as I left my candle burning on the table. All of a sudden I woke up with a start to find the now familiar figure of the 'White Lady' at the foot of my bed. She was gazing at me intently. When I sat up she glided away behind the screen at the door. I jumped up, put on my dressing-gown, seized the candle, and made for the door. The lady was gone, and the door was as I left it when I went to bed—*locked.* I unlocked it, flung it open, and looked into the passage. There she was. I saw the white dress, the splendid hair, the rosary, and the gold locket quite plainly. She turned her lovely face to me and smiled a sweet, pathetic smile; gently raised her hand, and floated away towards the picture gallery. Now for the end. Next day my kind hostess took me through the old gallery. I saw pictures of all ages, sorts, and sizes; but imagine my amazement when I saw '*The White Lady*'—the same white dress, the lovely sweet face and splendid eyes, the rosary, and a locket, which I now saw had on it the arms of Queen Mary and Lord Darnley. 'Who on earth is that?' I asked.

"'You seem interested in that painting,' said Mrs———. 'Well, that is a portrait of one of the lovely Mary Stuart's Maries. She was madly in love with Castelar, the French minstrel, and after he was beheaded at St Andrews she became a nun, and it is said died of grief in her nunnery.'

"That is all, old boy," he said, "and it is late. I think it seems right; *that* girl I and my sister saw *must* have been the spirit of Marie ———; and perhaps it was she who was the occupant of that haunted tower—who knows? but I shall never, never see such a divinely beautiful face on this earth again."

Concerning More Appearances of the White Lady.

I HAD been invited, and was sitting at tea with a very dear old lady friend of mine not long ago. It may seem strange, but tea is, I consider, an extra and an unnecessary meal. It does not appeal to me in the least, and only spoils one's dinner and digestion. The reason I went to tea was because in her note to me the lady mentioned that she had read my book of ghost tales, and that she was interested in ghosts in general and St Andrews ghosts in particular, and that she knew lots of such stories in the days of her girlhood in St Andrews, now about 85 years ago. That is why I went to eat cakes with sugar, hot buttered toast, and drink tea as black as senna or a black draught. She had also informed me in the note that she could tell me a lot about the Haunted Tower and the Beautiful White Lady.

It took some time to get her to that point. She would talk about Archbishop Sharpe and his haunted house in the Pends Road, of the ghost seen by Archbishop Ross, of my friend the Veiled Nun, of the Cathedral and Mr John Knox, of Hungus, King of the Picts, of Constantine, Thomas Plater, and various others. She told me a long tale of the Rainham Ghost in Norfolk, known as "The Brown Lady of Rainham," whom her father Captain Marryat both saw, and so on.

At last we got near the subject I wished information on.

"In my young days," she said, "St Andrews was quite a wee bit place with grass-grown streets, red-tiled houses, outside stairs, queer narrow wynds, not over clean, only a few lights at night—here and there, an old bowet or oil lamp hanging at street corners. Every one believed in Sharpe's Phantom

Coach in those good old days."

"Did you ever see it?" I queried.

"No," she said, "but I have heard it rumble past, and I know those who have seen it, and many other things too."

"But tell me about the White Lady, please," I said.

"I will. Few people in those days cared to pass that haunted tower after nightfall. If they did they ran past it and also the Castle. Those new-fangled incandescent gas lamps have spoiled it all now. The White Lady was one of the *Maries*, one of the maids of honour to poor martyred Mary of Scotland, they said then. She was madly in love with the French poet and minstrel, 'Castelar,' and he was hopelessly in love, like many others, with Marie's lovely mistress, 'the Queen of Scots.'"

"Was she supposed to be the girl seen in the built-up haunted tower?" I asked.

"That I really can't say," she said. "There was a story often told in the old days that a beautiful embalmed girl in white lay in that tower, and it was there and near the Castle that she used to appear to the people. You know poor Castelar, the handsome minstrel, said and did some stupid things, and was beheaded at the Castle, and was probably buried near there. Get me from that shelf Whyte Melville's novel, 'The Queen's Maries.'"

I did as she bade me.

"Well, you will see there that the night before Castelar was to be beheaded kind Queen Mary sent one of her Maries, the one who loved Castelar, at her own special request to the Castle with her ring to offer him a pardon if he left this country for ever. This Marie did see Castelar, showed him the Queen's ring, and pleaded with him to comply, but he refused—he preferred death to banishment from his beloved Queen's Court, and the fair messenger left him *obstinate* in his dungeon. This faithful Marie paced up and down all that night before the Castle; then at dawn came the sound of a gun or culverin, a wreath of smoke floated out to sea, and Castelar was gone. Whyte Melville says she did not start, she did not shriek, nor faint, nor quiver, but she threw her hood back and looked wildly upward, gasping for air. Then as the rising sun shone on

her bare head, Marie's raven hair was all streaked and patched with grey. When Mary Stuart fled to England, this faithful Marie, now no more needed, became a nun in St Andrews. Look at page 371 of Whyte Melville's book," she said. So I read—"It was an early harvest that year in Scotland, but e'er the barley was white, Marie had done with nuns and nunneries, vows and ceremonies, withered hopes and mortal sorrows, and had gone to that place where the weary heart can alone find the rest it had so longed for at last."

The pathetic and the comic often go together. Just at this interesting point a cat sprang suddenly up and upset a cup of tea in the lap of my genial hostess. This created a diversion. Old ladies are apt to wander, which is annoying. She got clean away from her subject for a bit. She asked me if I knew Captain Robert Marshall, who wrote plays and "The Haunted Mayor." I said I knew Bob well, and that he was an old Madras College boy.

She then wanted to know if I knew how to pronounce the name of Mr Travis's American putter, and if Mr Low or I had ever tried it. She also wanted to know if I knew anything of the new patent clock worked on gramophone principles which shouted the hours instead of striking them.

Having answered all these queries to her satisfaction, and taken another cup of senna—I mean tea—I got her back to the White Lady.

"Oh, yes, my dear," she said, "I saw her, I and some friends. *A lot of us* had been out at Kinkell Braes one afternoon and stayed there long past the time allowed us. It was almost dark, and we scuttled up the brae from the Harbour rather frightened. Just near the turret light we saw the lady gliding along the top of the old Abbey wall. She was robed in a grey white dress with a veil over her head. She had raven black hair, and a string of beads hanging from her waist. We all huddled together, with our eyes and mouths wide open, and watched the figure. 'It's a girl sleep-walking,' I murmured. 'It's a bride,' whispered another. 'Oh! she'll fall,' said a little boy, grasping my arm. But she did not. She went inside the parapet wall at the Haunted Tower and vanished completely.

'It's a ghost; it's the White Lady,' we all shrieked, and ran off trembling home. My sister also saw her on one of the turrets in the Abbey wall, where she was seen by several people. Some months after, as I was doing my hair before my looking-glass, the same face looked over my shoulder, and I fainted. I have always felt an *eerie* feeling about a looking- glass ever since, even now, old woman as I am. Her lovely face is one never, never to be forgotten, having once seen it, but your new fashioned lamps have altered everything."

"And what do you think about it now" I asked her.

"I have told you all I know. The Lady used to be seen oftenest between the Castle and that old turret. Perhaps she came to look at the last resting-place of her much loved and wayward minstrel, Castelar. Maybe she came to re-visit the favourite haunts of her beloved girl Queen—truly called the Queen of the Roses; but to my dying day I shall never forget that face, that lovely, pathetic face I saw years ago, and which may still be seen by some. What! must you really go now; won't you have another cup of tea? Very well, good bye."

As I wended my way Clubwards I could not but think of the strange tale I had just heard and of Castelar's sad end, and I could not help wondering if I should ever be favoured with a sight of this beautiful White Lady.

A Spiritualistic Seance.

THE M'Whiskers, whom I met at Oban, were very jolly old people. Papa M'Whisker had made a big fortune teaplanting in Ceylon, and had bought, and added to Dramdotty Castle in the far, far north. They were perfectly full of ghosts and spiritualism, and at Dramdotty they seemed to have a ghost for every day in the week. On Monday there was the "Spotted Nun," on Tuesday the "Floating Infant," on Wednesday the "Headless Dwarf," on Thursday the "Vanishing Nigger," on Friday the "Burnt Lady," and on Saturday the "Human Balloon," and on Sunday the whole lot attended on them, and, I daresay, went to the kirk with them.

M'Whisker himself was a jovial soul, fond of his toddy, and very much resembled the Dougal Cratur in "Rob Roy." My friend, John Clyde, should have seen him. He had a furious red head of hair and beard of the same colour, and the street boys used to call after him the song, "The folks all call me Carroty, What, what, what, oh! Carroty," etc. Mrs M'Whisker was a stout lady with eyes like small tomatoes and a gimlet nose. They had a son, a boy of ten, called Fernando M'Whisker, because he was born in Spain. When they came to St Andrews they had purchased a number of my "Ghost Books." (These ghosts at present chiefly haunt the *Citizen* Warehouse, booksellers' shops, and the railway bookstall.) That is the reason perhaps that the M'Whiskers invited me to a spiritualistic seance at their house in South Street. They generally came to St Andrews for the winter, partly to get away from the cold of their northern home, and partly because they thought the history and atmosphere of St Andrews lent itself to an all-pervading presence of ghosts, spooks, and spirits. I had only been to two such shows before—one at Helensburgh and one at Cambridge—and was, and still am, very doubtful of the genuineness of spiritualism. On the day appointed I went to the M'Whiskers' house

in South Street, and was shown in by a Highlander in the M'Whisker tartan. It was early in the afternoon, but I found the shutters in the large room all shut, and a few dim lights only were burning. On a sideboard in the corner stood plenty of refreshments and everything else to comfort the inner man. In the centre of the room there was a round table covered with a M'Whisker tartan tablecloth, which touched the floor all round: this in itself was suspicious to my mind. I was introduced to the chief medium, one Mr Peter Fancourt, who looked as if he had been buried and dug up again. He was in tight, sleek black clothes, and resembled in every way "Uriah Heep" in "David Copperfield." The other medium was a Mrs Flyflap Corncockle. They were supposed not to know each other, but I am as certain that they were accomplices as that the Bell Rock is near St Andrews Bay. A number of chairs encircled the table. We had all to seat ourselves on these chairs, with our thumbs and little fingers touching round the edge of the table. The first thing that happened was a kind of "squish," and then a huge bouquet of flowers descended on the table from somewhere. It was a clever trick, but the flowers were of the commonest sort, and what I had seen in all the greengrocers' shops that morning. The lights were now turned very low, and a spirit arm and hand appeared floating about, which shone a good deal. It hovered about from the ceiling to above our heads, and when I got a chance I jumped on a chair and seized it with both hands. It seemed to shrink up, and was torn through my hands very forcibly, and in such a material manner that I was forced to let go. I don't know where the hand and arm went to, but it was simply a juggling trick. After this "Mr Heep" (I beg his pardon, Mr Fancourt) said that there was an unbeliever present, and as I was that unbeliever I was relegated to an armchair by the fireplace with one of M'Whisker's muckle cigars. From that point of vantage I watched the whole affair, and they assured me they would tell me all that was going on. The next very curious thing was that they suddenly all took their hands off the table, and their eyes slowly followed something ceilingwards. It was funny to see them all lying back staring up at the roof. Then very slowly their heads and eyes resumed their normal position.

"Did you see that?" said the M'Whisker triumphantly. "I saw nothing whatever," I remarked. "What! did you not see the table float up to the ceiling? It remained there quite half a second, and then came down as lightly as a feather." "I was watching the table the whole time," I said, "and it never moved an inch from its place." "Oh! you are an unbeliever," said Mrs M'Whisker sadly, "but later on when it is darker you will see Mr Fancourt float out of one of the windows and come in at the other." I fervently hoped if he did anything of the kind he would come a cropper on the pavement below and break some of his ribs. The table then started to dance about and move along, but this, I am certain, was simply engineered by those two mediums.

After some tomfoolery of this kind they all agreed that "Ouija" should be brought out. A large oblong yellow board was then produced and laid on the table. On it were the letters of the alphabet and a number of figures, also the sun, moon, and stars, and some other fantastic symbols. On this board was placed a small table with a round body and round head, it had three hind legs and a front, which was the pointer. These legs had little red velvet boots on. The two mediums then placed their hands on each side of this curious table, which immediately began to run about to the letters and figures, spelling out things and fixing dates in answer to questions asked. It was not the least like a planchette, which is on wheels. The first thing they informed me it had said was that a spirit called Clarissa was present, and for many years she had lain a-dying in that room. She maintained that she was some distant relation of the White Lady of the Haunted Tower. It then rushed into poetry. Its first effort was the "Legend of Purple James and his Girl," a comic thing which reminded me of the "Bab Ballads." They afterwards gave me a copy of this poem, which I still possess. Next the spirit gave us a Scotch poem about a haggis, and then one called "Edward and the Hard-Boiled Egg." It then devoted its attention to me, whom it characterised as the "Unbeliever." It stated that if the Antiquarian Society would dig a pit four feet square by six feet deep between the two dungeons in the Kitchen Tower of the Castle, and if the rock

were cut through, a cave would be found full of casks of good red wine. On no condition whatever would I, on such evidence, recommend the Society to strike a pick in there. The next spirit that turned up was one Jaspar Codlever. He alluded to me as "the Cambridge man in the chair with the cigar." He said that if excavations were made between the two last trees in Lawpark Wood a stone cist would be found full of Pictish ornaments. Again he told us that within a cave on the cliffs there was a chalice of great value placed there by Isabella the Nun, who still guarded it by night and day, and was very dangerous to approach. This spirit then went away, and his place was taken by a monk named Rudolph, who informed us that the entrance to the Crypt or sub-Chapel was between two of the pillars in the Priory. As there are a lot of pillars there, it is impossible to know which he meant. He said this entrance was near Roger's tomb. Who Roger may be I know not. He then told us about this Crypt. He said there was something so horrible in it that it turned him sick. Curiously enough, some thought-reading people told us the same story in the Town Hall some years ago, but they said the underground Chapel was at the east end of the Cathedral. The monk then went on to tell us of this place in the Priory. He said it had Purbeck marble pillars, a well of clear water, and three small costly altars, and a number of books of the Vincentian Canons. There was a short interval now, and the lights were turned up. I was anxious to get away, but they implored me to stay and see the cabinet and the spirits therein. I told them in my most dramatic fashion that I was late already, and I had a meeting on. M'Whisker then begged me, if I would not stay to see the spirits, to taste some, and he mixed me an excellent whisky-and-soda, which he called a "Blairgowrie." I then made my adieu, and was very glad to get once more into the street and also into a world of sense. The M'Whiskers informed me some days afterwards that they were very sorry at my leaving, as, after I had gone, Fancourt had floated out of the window, and numerous wonderful spirits had appeared in the cabinet. I am glad I went when I did, as I should certainly have taken a poker to that cabinet.

The Apparition of Sir Rodger de Wanklyn.

I AM very fond indeed of Christmas time. There has been little snow this season. I think it has forgotten how to snow in these days. Still, I always feel Christmassy. I think of the good old coaching days, when there was really snow, of Washington, Irving, and good old Dickens and Scott, of the yule log and the family gatherings and re-unions, of the wassail bowl, of frumenty and plum porridge, and mince pies, plum puddings, and holly and mistletoe and big dances in the servants' hall, of good old ancestral ghosts and hearty good cheer.

I am sitting to-day in a cosy armchair (of the old school, no modern fake) talking to my old friend, Theophilus Greenbracket. Filus, as I call him, is a clever man of many parts; he is a great traveller and sportsman, and takes a deep interest in every mortal thing. There is nothing of the kill joy or fossil about Greenbracket; he is up-to-date and true blue.

He is sitting opposite me smoking a gigantic cigar and imbibing rum punch, and talking hard; he always talks hard, but is never a bore, and never palls on one in the slightest degree. He has an enormous dog at his feet, with a fierce, vindictive expression, which belies its real nature, as it is gentle with everything and everybody, except cats and rats. Greenbracket is, among many other things, a great spiritualist and visionary, and possesses all kinds of mediumistic appliances, such as pythos, planchettes and ouijas, which he works with his old butler, Amos Bradleigh, who is another spirit hunter.

"By the bye," said Greenbracket, "I am at present taking lessons in music with Mr Easeboy." He says this so suddenly that he makes me jump, as we were talking about sea serpents

and the probability of their existence.

"Are you indeed, old chap," I said.

"Yes, thorough bass, and consecutive fifths and harmony and all that sort of thing, you know. He has a pupil, Macbeth Churchtimber, who has just written a thundering pretty waltz called "Eleanor Wynne."

"I thought Churchtimber," I mildly suggested, "only played severe classical stuff."

"Oh, yes," replied my friend, "but he occasionally touches on a lighter theme, and has even written a comic song, called, 'I lay beside a milestone with a sunflower on my brow.'"

"I must try it someday," I said, "but how about your ghosts? Have you seen any lately?"

"There was one here a few minutes ago," said Greenbracket, "a tall man in armour sitting in that corner over there."

"What rubbish," I said, quite crossly, "you dream things, or drink, or eat too much."

"No I don't," said Greenbracket, "do you really mean to to tell that you felt no sensation just now, no pricking or tingling feeling, or a chilly sensation down your back?"

"Certainly not, nothing of the kind," I replied.

"Well, that is queer," he said, "I know you don't see these things, but I fancied you would have felt a strange presence in some way. I don't know who the man in armour was. I have not seen him before, but my butler has, at all events. It was not Sir Roger de Wanklyn."

'Who the ———— is he?" I queried.

"Oh," said my host, "he is the earth-bound spirit of an architect who lived in St Andrews at the time that James the Fifth married Mary of Lorraine in the Cathedral; he says he was present at the ceremony and can describe it all. A gay pageant it was and much revelry."

"If you can get all this sort of curious information, which I don't exactly credit, why on earth can't you find out something practical and useful, for instance, where the secret underground hiding place is, and where all the tons of valuable ornaments, papers, and vestments are concealed?"

"My dear friend," said Greenbracket solemnly, "these

people won't be pumped ; they only tell you what they choose to, or are permitted to reveal."

"If they really do turn up and talk to you as you say they do, why on earth can't you get them to talk some useful sense ?"

"I really can't force their confidence," said Greenbracket, "all they do tell me voluntarily is most interesting and absorbing. This Sir Rodger planned numerous very important structural alterations in the Cathedral and elsewhere."

"It is all very odd to me," I said, "one meets people with strange ideas. I met a man years ago at Aberystwith who was a firm believer in the transmigration of souls. He said he quite remembered being a cab horse in Glasgow, and was certain when he left this planet he would become a parrot in Mars."

"I don't understand that sort of thing a bit," said my extraordinary friend, Greenbracket, "but Sir Rodger de Wanklyn has sometimes to visit the Valley of Fire and Frost, where there are mighty furnaces on one side of him and ice and snow on the other and it is very painful."

"I had that sort of experience the other day," I remarked, "at a meeting. On one side was a furnace of a fire and on the other a window wide open with a biting frost wind blowing in."

"Tuts," said Greenbracket "that's here ; I am talking of the spirit world."

"Hang ! your spirit stuff. Has your butler, Amos Bradleigh, seen any spookey things lately ?"

"Yes, he is much annoyed by the spirit of an evil old housekeeper here who lost her life by falling downstairs, and she is continually pushing him down my cellar stairs. He is furious."

"Is this butler of yours any connection of Jeremiah Anklebone ?" I asked.

"Yes, he is a cousin," said Greenbracket ; "all that family have second sight, and see and dream strange things."

"And who," I asked, "may this housekeeper be who pitched your butler down stairs ?"

"Oh," said Greenbracket, "she's a badly constituted raith, and her name is Annibal Strongthorn. She was housekeeper ages ago to this Sir Roger de Wanklyn in this very old house we are in."

"What happened to this Sir Roger? Has he told you?"

"Oh! yes he fell over the cliffs."

"Bless me, and did this old housekeeper woman push him over. Was she a murderess?"

"Oh, how can I tell," said Greenbracket peevishly, "he has told me nothing of the kind."

"Well, old fellow," I said, "you really do not get much interesting information out of your ghostly friends, but what I like about you is that all your numerous ghosts come straight to you, straight to head-quarters at once—you don't go fooling about with chairs and tables and sideboards and other pieces of timber in an idiotic way. If, as some people say, they can get chairs and tables and other articles of furniture to follow them about, why don't they go in for cheap furniture removals at night when the streets are empty?"

"Don't make a joke of everything," said Greenbracket, "I do see and converse with departed spirits. I do not ask them to come; they come to me, and half of them I have never heard of before or thought of either."

"May I ask, my good friend Greenbracket, what sort of clothes they wear when they pay you these visits; for instance, what does your latest apparition, Sir Rodger, clothe himself in?"

"Bless me!" said Theophilus, "why in the dress of his times, of course—a jerken, doublet, and hose, a rapier, and all that sort of thing; sometimes he wears a sort of coarse fustian cassock with a double breast."

"I can't make out," I said to my spiritualistic friend, "where these clothes come from. Have they got a sort of theatrical wardrobe wherever they are existing? If so, why can't the ghosts of old world clothes come alone? In such a case you might see a modern suit of evening togs, or armour, or boots and spurs, or military dress walk into your room without anything inside them; or you might, with a stretch of imagination, see a suit of pyjamas, or a pair of slippers going about the place."

"Shut up talking like that," said Theophilus, "you don't possess the sense—I mean the extra sense to see these beings; but read this document I have written out. Surely it will con-

vince you that I really do get valuable inspirations from other worlds, but, mind, keep it a strict secret at present."

"All right, I promise you," I murmured placidly. Then I perused carefully the more than extraordinary document he had handed me.

"It is very curious," I said, "if it be one bit true; and if genuine, might be extremely useful. Mind my lips are sealed. But from whom did you obtain this remarkable story?"

"From Sir Rodger de Wanklyn, the Cathedral architect," he replied, and off I went quite full of my queer friend, Greenbracket, and of Annabel Strongthorn, Amos Bradleigh, and his cousin Anklebone, and particularly Rodger de Wanklyn.

The Bewitched Ermentrude.

Very many years ago now I was santering down historic old South Street one November afternoon, my object being to lunch in one of the quaint houses with my old time friend, Harold Slitherwick. Lunch was not, however, the main object of my visit, but to meet a man called Reginald Saedegar, an ex-Indian judge, who had *actually* seen a genuine spirit or ghost.

It is a sad, nay, a melancholy fact (for I have been told this by the very best authorities) that *I am not Psychic*, despite the fact that I have spent days and nights in gloomy, grimly-haunted chambers and ruins, and even a lonesome Hallowe'en night on the summit of St Rule's ancient Tower (my only companions being sandwiches, matches, some cigars, and the necessary and indispensable flask), yet, alas! I have *never* heard or seen anything the least abnormal, or felt the necessary, or much-talked-of mystic presence.

Arrived at the old mansion, I was duly ushered in by Slitherwick's butler, one Joe Bingworthy, a man with the manner and appearance of an archbishop, and from whom one always seemed to expect a sort of pontifical blessing.

There were several fellows there, and I was speedily made known to Sædeger, a very cheery, pleasant little person, with dark hair and big eyebrows.

There was a very heated discussion going on when I entered as to what was really a properly constituted Cathedral. Darkwood was shouting, "No Bishop's Chair, *no* Cathedral." "If," he said, "a Bishop had his chair in a tiny chapel, it was a Cathedral, but if a religious building was as big as the Crystal Palace, and there was no Bishop's Chair there, it was not one bit a Cathedral."

I stopped this discussion suddenly by asking Sædegar

about his ghost, and was told I would hear the whole story after lunch.

Before we adjourned to the smoke room Sædeger was telling us he felt a bit knocked up with his long journey. He had a thirty-six hours' journey after he left good old Tony-Pandy. Visions of "Tony Lumpkin," and "Tony Faust," in "My Sweetheart," flitted through my brain, then I suddenly remembered, luckily, that "Tony-pandy" was a town in Wales.

Once comfortably seated in the smoke-room with pipes, cigars, and whisky, Reginald Sædeger became at once the centre of all the interest.

"Lots of years ago," he said, in a quiet legal voice, "I came to visit some friends in St Andrews, and I had a most unaccountable experience. I will tell you all about it. I never saw anything supernatural before, and have never seen anything the least remarkable since; but one night, my first night in that house, I undoubtedly saw the wraith of the 'Blue Girl.'"

"What had you for supper that evening?" I mildly asked.

"Only chicken and salad," was the reply. "I was not thinking of anything ghostly. If you fix your mind *intently* on one thing, some folk can, you can self-hypotnise yourself. I had no idea but golf in my mind when I went off to roost."

"Well, drive ahead," said I.

"I had a charming, comfortable, big old-world room given me, nice fire, and all that sort of thing," continued Sædeger, "and as I was deuced tired I soon went to bed and to sleep.

"I woke suddenly, later, with the firm conviction that a pair of eyes were fixed on me. I suppose everyone knows that if you stare fixedly at any sleeping person, they will soon awake. I got a start when I half-opened my eyes, for leaning on the mantelpiece staring hard at me in the mirror was a most beautiful girl in a light blue gauzy dress, her back, of course, was to the bed, and I saw she had masses of wavy, golden-brown hair hanging down long past her waist.

"I was utterly astonished, and watched the movements of this beautiful creature with my eyes almost closed. I felt sure it was someone in the house having a lark at my expense, so pretended to be asleep. As I watched, the girl turned round

and faced me, and I marvelled at the extraordinary loveliness of her figure and features. I wondered if she was a guest in the house, and what she was doing wandering about at that time of night, and if she was sleep-walking ? She then glided—it certainly *was not walking*—to a corner of the room, and then I noticed that her feet were bare. She seemed to move along above the carpet—not on it—a curious motion. She drifted, and stood beneath a big picture, took out a key and opened a small aumbrey, or cupboard, in the wall quite noiselessly. And from this receptacle she took out some small things that glittered in her pretty fingers, long taper fingers."

" How on earth did you contrive to see all that in a dark bedroom ? " I sarcastically inquired.

" The room wasn't dark," said Sædeger. " I always keep the light burning in a strange house and in a strange room."

" Oh, I see," I replied. " Go on."

" Well," continued Reginald Sædeger, " she then turned and came towards the bed, and I got a more distinct view of her. I had never seen anyone a bit like her before ; it was an utterly unforgettable face. I have certainly never before, or since, seen anyone as pretty as she was—yet it was a strange, *unearthly* beauty, and her huge forget-me-not blue eyes were a perfection of pathos. Nearer, and yet nearer, she came, and when quite close to the bed, she bent over me and raised her hand with the glittering thing in it high over my head. Then I made a tremendous spring out of bed, crying loudly, 'Now I'll see who is trying to frighten me.' I flung out my arms to grasp her, but they closed on nothing, and to my utter astonishment I saw her standing smiling at me on the opposite side of the room.

" That was odd and uncanny enough, but then she gradually began to disappear, dissolving into a thin blue-grey mist, until nothing whatever remained—I was absolutely alone in the room and dumfoundered."

" What next ? " I asked.

" Well ! what could I do or think ? " said Sædeger. " I was fairly flabbergasted at the unexpected turn of events. I admit I felt shaky, so I took a stiff whisky and soda, smoked a

pipe, and went back to bed to reflect on the matter, and fell asleep. I was wakened in the morning by my host, Harold Slitherwick, walking into the room carrying a pony brandy for me."

"Well, old blighter, how have you slept?" he asked.

"Then I told him about the blue girl."

"Bless my heart! Have you seen her too? Lots of people, my wife among the number, declare they have seen her; but as you have seen her now, I really begin to believe there is some truth in the tale."

"I then told my host there was no dubiety about the matter, and pointed out the place under the picture where there was a cupboard. We both went and looked. There was no cupboard to be seen."

"Very rum thing," said my host; "there was a murder once took place in this room ages ago. Perhaps the blue lady had something to do with it; but let us hunt for your cupboard."

"On rapping with our knuckles on the wall we found a hollow spot, scraped off the paper, and there sure enough was the little door I had seen. We soon forced it open, and discovered a receptacle, about a foot square, going very deep into the thick stone wall. There were a lot of things in that place, scissors, a thimble, a dagger, a work-box, and a lot of old musty, dusty papers. And then we found a long tress of ruddy-gold hair in an envelope and a beautiful miniature magnificently painted on ivory of the blue girl I had seen—every detail, the face, the dress, the hair, and the bare feet, were perfectly exact. On both the envelope and the miniature were written the names 'Ermentrude Ermengarde Annibal Beaurepaire,' with the date 1559.

"We then examined the old documents which gave us some clue to the mystery. It was a very long story that we had to read over, but I will tell it to you briefly. Long ages ago this ancient house was the property of a Frenchman, Monsieur Louis Beaurepaire. He had an only and lovely daughter of twenty, named Ermentrude Ermengarde Annibal Beaurepaire, who was intended to be a bride of the Church, otherwise a nun. This idea, apparently, did not appeal to her views. She pas-

sionately loved a young student, and was equally beloved by him, whose name was Eugene Malvoisine.

"All went well it seems, for two years, and they were to be married in the Cathedral at Easter. All the arrangements were complete for the nuptials; but fortune is a fickle jade, and willed it otherwise. A rival turned up on the scene in the person of Marie de Mailross, a cousin of the Beaurepaires, and a frequent guest at their house. Ermentrude found that her beloved Eugene had proved faithless, and transferred his youthful affections to the lovely Marie, and that a speedy elopement was pending.

"Ermentrude went and consulted a wise woman, otherwise a witch, who resided in Argyll, outwith the Shoegate Port. This witch, by name 'Alistoun Brathwaite,' used her evil powers on the fair Ermentrude, and enraged her jealousy to fury and a desire for revenge, and presented her with a potion, and a cunning, well-wrought dagger.

"The witch threw a spell over Ermentrude, and took all the good within her away, and implanted evil passions within her breast. It seems that Marie of Mailross slept in this old room, and one night Ermentrude, willed by the witch, went to Marie's bedside, and planted the dagger in her heart, and she died. It seems Ermentrude disappeared, and was never seen or heard of again, and was supposed to have drowned herself at the Maiden Rock—hence the name it bears.

"That," said Sædeger, "is my quaint tale. The room I slept in was the very room in which in ages past, Marie was done to death by Ermentrude, and it seems to have been my lot to see Ermentrude and discover the secret that lay in that old cupboard."

We all thanked Sædeger, and after thoughtfully consuming a few more whiskies and sodas, and a few more cigars, went off to the Links pondering deeply.

A Very Peculiar House.

LAST time I visited Cambridge I was invited by a friend to meet a party of merry undergraduates. They had all nicknames, and what their real names were I cannot remember. There was Mike, and Whiffle, Toddie, Bulger, the Infant, Eddie Smith from Ramsgate, and the Coal Scuttle. We had a most sumptuous repast, as only can be supplied by first-class Cambridge kitchens, and to which we did ample justice. We were smoking after lunch when they informed me that they had taken the liberty of making an engagement for me to go to tea with such a dear old lady called Sister Elfreda at a house in Bridge Street, opposite St Clement's Church, on the following day at 4.30, as she wished to tell me some ghostly experiences she had had at St Andrews. Of course I said I would very gladly go. They asked me before I went if I could take them behind the scenes that night at the Cambridge Theatre. This I had to flatly refuse, as no undergraduates are allowed within the sacred precincts of the stage door. Next day was a damp, raw, typical Cambridge day. I wended my way to Bridge Street, and easily found the house I was going to, as I had once lodged there. The rooms were kept by two old women who might be called decayed gentlewomen. Their name was Monkswood, and they had been nicknamed "The Cruets," namely, "Pepper" and "Vinegar." Very different from them was their niece, a lovely young actress, who was known on the stage as Patricia Glencluse, who was quite the rage in musical comedy, and who, it was rumoured abroad, would soon become a Duchess. The door was opened by Patricia herself, who said, "Oh, I thought it might be you. Sister Elfreda told me you were coming to tea. You will like her, she is such a darling—just like the "Belle of New York," only grown older. If you write any-

thing about what she tells you, mind you send it to me, to the Whittington Company, ——— Theatre, Birmingham." "Of course I will," I said, "and I will put you in it." "Now come along upstairs and I will introduce you to her," she said. She tapped at a door and then opened it, and ushered me into the presence of the Sister. "Look here, Sister," said Patricia, "I have brought the ghost man from St Andrews to see you. Here he is." "Very good of you," said the Sister as she shook hands with me warmly. "You know," she said, "I have read all your ghost tales." She then told Patricia to run downstairs and send the servant up with tea. Then we seated ourselves down to tea and muffins, and the old lady related her story. She said:—"I wanted very much to tell you of a little experience I had some months ago. I was asked to come up for a short time to look after an invalid lady who lived at St Andrews. Well, I arrived safely there, and went from the station to the house in a 'bus. It was an old house, and when I entered I felt a queer sort of creepy sensation come over me such as I had never experienced before. I was ushered into the presence of my host and hostess and the invalid lady. He was a splendid example of an old British soldier, and his wife was a pretty, fragile-looking old piece of china. The invalid lady I found only suffered from nerves, and very little wonder, I thought, in such a peculiar house. I had always a fancy that some other human being resided in the house; but if so, it only remained a feeling. The name of the cook was Timbletoss, the butler was Corncockle, and oddly enough they both came from Cambridge." "What curious names there are here," I said to the Sister; "when I first went to Cambridge I thought the names over the shops must be some gigantic joke—a man once suggested to me that someone must have been specially engaged to come to Cambridge and invent those wonderful names." "Well," continued the Sister, "it really was a most extraordinary house. I had never seen anything out of the common before, and I have never seen anything like that house since. The servants told me most remarkable tales—how the bedclothes were twitched off the bed in the night by unseen hands, and how the tables and chairs rattled about over the floor, and

the knives and forks flew off the table. Curious little coloured flames known there as "Burbilangs' used to float about in the air at night, and Corncockle, the butler, said the beer taps in the cellar were constantly turned on and the gas turned off. The servants had to have their wages considerably raised to keep them in the house. At luncheon on several occasions the lady used to jump up and run out of the room in great haste, and did not reappear till dinner, when she looked very white and shaky. On two occasions I was ordered to go at once to my room and lock the door and remain there until the old Squire sounded the hall gong. They seemed very much perturbed when I got down again. I will only mention one or two curious things I saw. One was a quaint creature called the 'Mutilated Football,' which stotted downstairs in front of me, and when it reached the lobby a head and a pair of arms and legs appeared, and it pattered off down the cellar stairs at a breakneck speed. The story goes that this creature was once a great athlete and football player, and when he got old and fat would insist on still playing, though warned not to do so. He got such a severe kick that his ribs were broken, and he died on the field. I never heard the true story of the 'Animated Hairpin,' but I saw it once seated in an armchair in the dining-room. It looked as if it had on black tights and close-fitting black jersey. It had a very long white face, with great round eyes like an owl's and black hair standing on end to a great height. When it saw me it got up quickly from the chair, bowed very low till its head nearly touched the ground, and then walked in a most stately manner out of the room. Then I saw 'The Green Lady'—a tall, beautiful girl with very long hair and a rustling green brocaded dress. She glided along as if on wheels. That this was no imagination of mine may be drawn from the fact that one day when I had a little girl to tea she suddenly clutched my arm and asked me who that beautiful lady in green with the long hair was, who had gone past the door on roller skates. I will not enlarge now on the bangings, crashes, thumpings, and tappings that resounded through the rooms at all times of day and night, sometimes on the ceilings, sometimes on the walls, and sometimes on the floors. The doors and windows,

too, had a nasty habit of suddenly opening without any visible cause; and another very curious thing was that one might be sitting by a very bright fire when, without any apparent cause, it would suddenly go out, and leave nothing but inky blackness. The first night I slept in my room in this peculiar house I examined it most thoroughly, but there was nothing out of the common to be seen. My door, which I most carefully locked, flew open with a bang, though the bolt still remained out. I again closed and re-locked the door, and put a chair against it, but to my astonishment the door once more flew open and hurled the chair across the room. After that I decided to leave the door wide open and see what would happen next. I got quite accustomed to the 'Burbilangs' or flying lights—they were like pretty fireworks. Nothing more happened to me for several days, till one morning I awoke about two o'clock to find a youngish-looking monk seated in an arm-chair. 'Fear not,' he said, 'Sister Elfreda, I left this earth many years ago. In life my name was Walter Desmond, but when I became a monk at St Anthony I was known as Brother Stanilaus. As a rule I am invisible, but can assume my bodily shape if necessary. In life I was at St Andrews, Durham, and Cambridge.' 'When in Cambridge,' I asked, 'did you know the writer of St Andrews ghost stories?' 'No, I only knew him by sight. I was very young then, and was somewhat afraid of him, as I heard when getting on the Links he used to become very violent if he missed a putt, topped a drive, foozled an iron shot, or got into any of the numerous ditches which intersect the Cambridge links. But I came specially to see you to-night to tell you how to rid this house of the evil influence there is over it. I have here a manuscript regarding it which I took from a foreign library, and which I wish you to read and act upon, and so purify this house and render it habitable, but I must impose the strictest secrecy on you in regard to what you read; reveal it to no one.' 'But how will you get that paper back?' I asked the brother. 'Oh, time and space are nothing to us—I got this paper from that distant library only a few seconds ago, and when you have digested it, it will be immediately replaced from whence it came; only follow all the directions

carefully, or my visit will have been of no avail.' We read the paper over together most carefully, but of that I may say no more 'Having told you what to do,' said the monk, 'I fear I must hie hence. I have much to do to-night after replacing the paper.' 'I will fulfill all that you have asked me brother,' I said, 'and hope that it will make this house less fearsome. But before you go, brother,' I said, 'as you are a Cambridge man, why do you not pay a visit to the author of St Andrews Ghost Stories?' 'He would not see me because I would not materialise myself there, I could only appear as a puff of smoke, or, as it were, a light fog.' ('Thanks, Sister,' I said, 'do not ask any nasty damp fogs to come and call on me.' She laughed.) The monk, in vanishing, said, 'Remember, Sister, no bolts, locks, or bars can keep us from going where we choose.'"

I got up and thanked her, and proceeded to put on a great-coat. "I never wear greatcoats," I said, "in Scotland, but I am afraid of the Cambridge damp, so I borrowed this topcoat from Colonel Churchtimber."

"You have dropped something out of the pocket," said the Sister.

"Hullo," I said, "this is a piece of classical music which must belong to Macbeth Churchtimber, the Colonel's son. Now, good-night, and many thanks, Sister Elfreda."

I descended the stairs and said good-night to the Cruets and Patricia. As I wandered down the street to the theatre in the damp foggy evening I pondered over what Sister Elfreda had told me, and as I lit my pipe I kept thinking of those people —"The Mutilated Football," "The Animated Hairpin," and the "Monk Brother Stanilaus," to whom locks, bolts and bars were as nothing, and who had the nasty habit of appearing to his friends as a damp cloud—a habit, I think, not to be encouraged.

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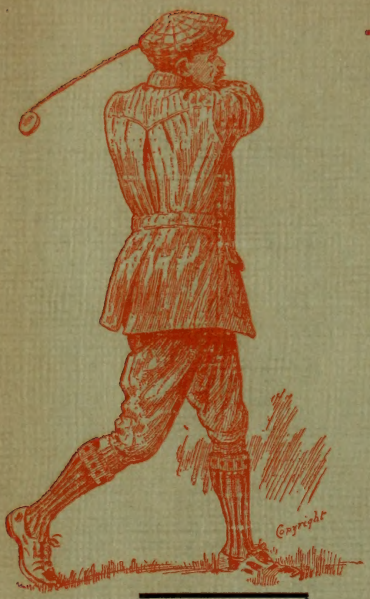
Sister Elfreda now informs me that the peculiar house is now quite "normal," and that all the "bogies" have vanished into thin air.



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